Grand Ayatollah
Sayyid Muhammad Hussain Fadlullah

ISLAMIC LANTERNS

Conceptual and jurisprudence questions
for natives, emigrants and expatriates

Translation
S. al-Samarra'i

Al-Malak Edition

First English edition 1425H / 2004

COPYRIGHT
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

PUBLISHER
Dar Al-Malak
Beirut, Lebanon, P.O. Box 158/25
www.dar-almalak.com
Email:dam@dar-almalak.com

Grand Ayatollah
Sayyid Muhammad Husain Fadlullah

ISLAMIC LANTERNS

Conceptual and jurisprudence questions for natives, emigrants and expatriates

Compilation
Adil al-Qadi
and
S. al-Samarra'i

Translation
S. al-Samarra'i

AL-MALAK Editions

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of God, the
Compassionate, the Merciful

CONTENTS

Translator's preface 12
Transliteration 15
Verification of authenticity 16
Glossary 17
Introduction 25

Qur'ānic verses 43
***Ḥadīth* narrations** 48

Chapter one: The Qur'ānic concept of emigration 53
The Concept of Emigration in the Qur'ān 54
The positive view of emigration 56
The negative aspects of emigration 59
The Qur'ānic Categorisation of Emigration 61
Emigration in the past and the present: a comparative view 66
The characteristics of the land of emigration 68
Preserving the principles 70
The concept of *at-ta'arrub ba'dal hijrah* 71
The effect of environment on upbringing 78

Chapter two: Emigration: Establishing a Foundation in Jurisprudence 81
The jurisprudence of minorities 82
Changing nationality and related issues 85
Residence 87
Allegiance to the non-Muslim ruler 89
Submitting to the laws of non-Islamic governments 91
Relying on a non-Islamic judiciary 92

Working in a non-Muslim government 92
The relationship with non-Muslims 94
Code of conduct in dealing with Western institutions 97
Crime 100
Relations with Christian institutions 102
Joining political parties 105
Giving concessions 109
Leniency over doing what is prohibited 110
Moving around the obscurities 111
Opening up to non-Muslims 112
Islamic societies 117
Islamic 'incubators' 119
The Westerners' monitoring of the behaviour of Muslims 120
Divorce in Western courts 121

Chapter 3: The Problems Facing Expatriates 123
Problem 1: Assimilation of the (new) arena 124
Problem 2: The shaking (weakening) of belief 125
Problem 3: Aimlessness 126
Problem 4: Looking for the negative points (only) 127
Problem 5: The weakening of the features of Islamic identity 129
Problem 6: Indulging in materialistic life 130
Problem 7: Taking advantage of the rulings (*fatāwā*) 133
Problem 8: Laziness 134
Problem 9: Between being bedazzled by the West and adapting to it 138
Problem 10: Abandoning guidance meetings 141
Problem 11: The retreat from politics 142
Problem 12: Reliance on (putting all trust in) an external solution 145

Problem 13: Submission to the status quo **147**
Problem 14: Reluctance concerning women's activities **150**
Negative phenomena **151**
(A) Fragmentation **151**
(B) Slander and defamation **155**
(C) Spare time (and nothing to do) **156**
(D) (Harmful) gossip **157**
(E) Weakness of the collective spirit **157**
(F) The inferiority complex **158**
(G) The feeling of defeat **158**
(H) Lapses in shyness (modesty) **160**
(I) The decline of congregational prayer **160**

Chapter 4: An Opportunity for Islam **161**
First: Schools **162**
Second: Maintaining links with the homeland **164**
Third: The emigrants' political and media roles **165**
Fourth: Benefiting from the experiences of others **166**
Fifth: Establishing pressure groups **168**
Sixth: What should be taken and what should be left **170**
Reverse emigration **172**

Chapter 5: The Conveyors' Issues **173**
The concept of the conveyor **174**
The conveyors' tools **175**
The peculiarity of the political conveyor **175**

Replicating past experiences 176
Transferring social ills 177
The conveyors' crisis 177
Approaching non-Muslims 178
The Ḥusaīniyy pulpit 179

Chapter 6: Emigration Studies 183
The emigration phenomenon in the contemporary Islamic reality 184
Being freed from pressure 186
Strengthening positions in respect of the call (Message) 186
The opening up of Islamic speech 187
Islamic unity 188
Political flexibility 190
Preserving the Islamic personality 191
Confronting challenges 192
Muslim emigration to the West and Islam's standpoint towards it 194
Negative influences 194
Islamic planning to protect the person 195
Opening up to meet our essential needs 197
Providing an Islamic environment 199
A word of guidance 200
The Muslim family in Western society: confronting the challenges 202
Responsibility of care for the family 202
Responsibility for solidarity 204
The problem of the young generation 205
A suggestion for a remedial plan 206

Youth and the West: between original values and contemporary values **211**
Criticism of contemporary Islamic speech **211**
Why 'the youth and the West'? **213**
Unchangeable things and changeable things **215**
Western materialism **215**
My speech to the youth **217**
My speech to Islamic activists **220**

Chapter 7: Emigration Agendas **223**
Words of Guidance **224**
First: His Eminence's call to emigrants in all countries **225**
Establishing Islamic centres **225**
Abandoning partisanships and disputes **225**
Acquiring more cultural knowledge **228**
Conveying Allāh's Messages **229**
Various responsibilities **230**
Second: America **232**
Our role on his anniversary **233**
Integration of capabilities **234**
The school before the mosque **235**
The Islamic family **236**
Calling to Islam **237**
Containing disputes **238**
Responsibility towards orphans **238**
Third: Chicago – America **240**
Original Islam first **240**

Judge your selves 241
The bonds of the brotherhood of belief 242
The areas of agreement are numerous 243
The cause of the confiscated homeland 244
O sons of 'Alī and al-Ḥusaīn 247
Fourth: Muslim Youth League – London, UK 249
Fifth: Australia 250
The first point: straightness 250
The second point: unity 253
The third point: trust 254
The fourth point: opening up 256
The fifth point: Islam 256
Sixth: Switzerland 258
Seventh: Norway 260
Eighth: Denmark 262
Ninth: The Netherlands 266
Tenth: Detroit - America 270
Questions from, and dialogues with, emigrants and expatriates 278
First: Questions from the Islamic Group of America and Canada Youth 278
Second: Questions (over the telephone) from the Muslim Youth League, London, UK 286
Third: Questions from brother Abū Jihād al-Ḥusaīniyy, Sweden 289

Chapter 8: Emigration Jurisprudence 295
(A) Following the Grand Islamic Jurists (*at-Taqlīd*) 296

(B) Emigration and religion 298
(C) Purity and Impurity (*Aṭ-Ṭahārah wan-Najāsah*) 302
(D) Prayer (*Aṣ-Ṣalāt*) 306
(E) Food and Drink 312
(F) Dress and Appearance 322
(G) Man and Woman 328
(H) Marriage and Divorce 336
(I) Money Matters 353
(J) Trade-related Matters 363
(K) Music and Singing 368
(L) Medical Matters 370
(M) Mixed Issues 375
(N) Living in non-Muslim countries 385
(O) Propagating Islam (***At-Tablīgh/ad-da'wah***) 397
(P) Politics 402

Translator's Preface

Generally, any translation results in a version that is inferior to the original. This is more so when the text in question is of a certain type, such as religious or poetic. The task will certainly be made more difficult when the material involves ideology, argument etc. Such a task will be made even more difficult when it involves religious rulings regarding religious do's and don'ts, or when the text may be crucial to individuals or community. To add to the complexity of the matter, sacred texts make it vital for the translator to be even more careful when trying to transmit the meaning, which in the case of the Qur'an largely involves subtle meanings and detail. A book containing ideas, conceptual argument, political judgement, and jurisprudence rulings and arguments by a distinguished scholar and grand authority like Sayyid Muḥammad Husaīn Faḍlullāh will certainly contain all these elements!

This made it necessary that – although meaning-dependent translation had to be implemented, obviously without changing the ideas – when literal translation produced an adequate English version, it was adhered to. This will help not only in conveying the author's text, but will also help in preserving those subtle meanings, especially in Qur'anic verses. More literal adherence was implemented when translating jurisprudence rulings, especially those found in chapter 8.

All words between brackets have been added by the translator to clarify sentences or terms, or to add the equivalent Arabic words. Thus everything inside brackets is not part of the original Arabic text. Because of the sensitivity of the subject of jurisprudence, every Arabic word – the inclusion of which seemed safer for ensuring that the reader would get the ruling correct – such as *ṭāhir* or *ḥarām*, has been written between

brackets in italic, after its English translation. This was done even at the risk of repetition.

Qur'anic verses and the words of the infallibles in *ḥadīth*s are printed in bold. They are all enclosed within single quotation marks. Quotations within these are enclosed within double quotation marks.

Three different translations of the Qur'an were used:

(1) *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an with Commentary*, 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, Amana Corporation, Maryland, USA, 1992.

(2) *The Holy Qur'an with English Translation and Commentary*, S.V. Mīr Ahmed 'Alī, Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an Inc., New York, USA, 1988.

(3) *The Koran*, N.J. Dāwood, Penguin Books, London, UK, 1995 reprint.

The numbers of the chapters (*sūras*) and verses (*āyahs*) have been inserted immediately after the verse as two numbers separated by a colon. Some verses found in this book are a mixture of more than one of these translations.

The book is composed of questions presented to his Eminence Sayyid M. H. Faḍlullāh and his answers. This applies to both types: conceptual and purely jurisprudence questions. However, the original Arabic book has no question numbers except in chapter 8; thus numbers have been added throughout so that following and using the book as a reference would be easier.

Chapter 8 contains hundreds of questions that have been presented over the years to his Eminence the Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh. His Eminence's archives contain thousands of jurisprudence questions concerning all of life's affairs. The questions chosen here are those which can be included under the category of Emigration Jurisprudence.

This book does not confine itself to the questions included in Chapter 8 of the book *al-Hijrah wal Ightirāb*. More questions have

been added from the book *Taḥaddiyāt al-Mahjar* and the series *Mi'at Su'āl wa Jawāb*, issues 1-13. Also, new questions have been added, the rulings for which were obtained from his Eminence in early 2003.

All the questions from Chapter 8 have been regrouped into different categories in order to make searching for questions easier and quicker. When a question justified being included in more than one category, it was listed under the more relevant one, in accordance with the aim of the book. Questions that were seen as relevant only to Muslims living in non-Muslim countries have been listed under 'Living in non-Muslim countries'.

To help the reader quickly find a question of a similar nature to the one under consideration, in each question some words are printed in bold to highlight the main issue of the question.

All Arabic words are written in italics. Transliteration was used throughout, and the system implemented is found in the following table.

Finally, I hope that I have been successful in conveying the ideas, concepts, arguments and rulings in their most accurate English equivalents, and pray that any shortcomings in my translation will be forgiven by Allah and be accepted by the readers as inescapable in such endeavour.

Transliteration

There are different transliteration systems for writing the Arabic alphabet in English. The system used in this book is given in the following table. A few words in this book, such as Mecca and Islam, do not follow this system since they have become widely written in a way that is not exactly similar to this system.

’	ء	s	س	m	م
a	أ	sh	ش	n	ن
b	ب	ṣ Ṣ	ص	h	هـ
t	ت	ḍ Ḍ	ض	w	و
th	ث	ṭ Ṭ	ط	y	ي
j	ج	dh DH	ظ	ā Ā	آ
ḥ Ḥ	ح	‘	ع	at or ah	ة
kh	خ	gh	غ	ū Ū	ؤ
d	د	f	ف	ī Ī	ي
th	ذ	q	ق	a	ـَ (فَتحة)
r	ر	k	ك	u	ـُ (ضَمّة)
z	ز	l	ل	i	ـِ (كَسرة)

Verification of Authenticity

In the Name of Allāh the Merciful the Compassionate

To: His Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh

Q – Do all the jurisprudence questions that relate to emigration jurisprudence, and all the foundations in jurisprudence concerning the problem of emigration and asylum that goes under that title, and which are included in the book *al-Hijrah wal-Ightirāb* (*Emigration and Expatriation*), conform to your rulings (*fatāwā*), i.e. can people depend on these rulings (and regard them) as part of your book of rulings (*ar-risālah al-'amaliyyah*), and are they satisfactory in terms of meeting (our) obligations before Allāh?

A – The jurisprudence questions, and other matters related to them, that may be included under the title of emigration and asylum in the book of *Ightirāb* represent our jurisprudence rulings upon which followers (*muqallidīn*) are allowed to depend, and they are deemed satisfactory as far as meeting (their) obligations before Allāh, God-willing. And Allāh is the guide to the good and we depend on Him alone.

19th Shawwāl 1419H

Muḥammad Husaīn Faḍlullāh's seal

محمد حسين فضل الله

١٥ ربيع الأول ١٤٢٥هـ

Glossary of terms

Please note that the following terms are listed according to their topics.

Fundamentals

God the Most High : Allah *ta'ālā*

formative infallibility : *'Ṣmah takwīniyyah*, the state of infallibility that is inherent in infallible individuals

guardianship : *wilāyah*, the position of a given individual who has authority over others, e.g. the position of the Prophet (sawa) and Imams (as)

the concealed : *ghayb*, the knowledge or things that are unknown to anyone but God, or to whomever He chooses to know

Conduct, struggle and Islamic propagation

dynamic conduct : *ḥarakiyyah*, a term widely used by his Eminence to describe the way in which a Muslim who adheres to Islamic views and aspirations involves Islam in all aspects of his life , especially politics and socio-politics

dynamic movement : *ḥarakah*, the actions taken by a Muslim who pursues a dynamic engagement with life

allegiance : *walā'*, the state of loyalty, involving following, to someone or something

a person with a mission/message-bearing : *risāliyy*, a person who has a defined purpose – a mission – in life

affiliations : *khuṭūṭ*, intellectual or partisan doctrines

line(s) : *khaṭṭ* (pl. *khuṭūṭ*), intellectual or partisan doctrine/doctrines

oppressor : *dhālim*, someone who commits injustice

oppression/inflicting injustice : *dhulm*, committing injustice

arrogant forces : *mustakbirīn*, individuals or states that subjugate other people or countries

those deemed weak (by the arrogant forces) : *mustaḍ'afīn*, the object of the action by arrogant forces (*mustakbirīn*)

hardship : *balā'*

fear of being forced to abandon Islam out of fear of, or because of, persecution : *fitnah*

fear of deviation from the correct path as a result of sexual seduction : *fitnah*

(hard) struggle/striving : *jihād*, carrying out struggle either to elevate the soul and fight its shortcomings and forbidden desires, or against the enemies of Islam

god fearing : *taqwā*

proceeded : *'inṭalaqa*, initiating an action or endeavour

intellectual doctrine/school of thought/thought : *fikr*

intellectual : *fikriyy*

conveying : *tablīgh*, the teaching of Islamic knowledge, normally by a clergyman to followers of the religion

conveyor : *muballigh*, Islamic scholar who has acquired sufficient knowledge of Islam and its rulings that he can satisfy the needs of laymen (non-specialist Muslims)

call/propagating : *da'wah*, the actions by any Muslim, scholar or otherwise, to propagate Islam and its values

enjoining what is right : *amr bil ma'rūf*, one of the branches of Islam, advising others –sometimes compelling them –to do things that are considered by Islam to be good or right

forbidding what is wrong (evil) : *nahy 'anil munkar*, one of the branches of Islam, advising others – sometimes compelling them – not to do things that are considered by Islam to be not good or right

People according to their belief

atheist/infidel : *kāfir*, one who denies the existence of God

polytheist : *mushrik*, one who worships more than one god

People of the Book : *ahlul kitāb*, Christians and Jews

a person from the People of the Book : *kitābiyy*, a Christian or a Jew

Jurisprudence

Shari'ah/Islamic law : *shari'ah*

the Sunnah : *as-Sunnah*, the sayings, acts and affirmations of the Prophet (sawa) and the Imāms (as)

narration/*ḥadīth* : *ḥadīth*, the sayings of the Prophet (sawa) and the Imāms (as)

Islamic jurist(s) : *faqih* (pl. *fuqahā'*)/*mujtahid* (pl. *mujtahidūn*), an Islamic learned scholar who has reached the highest level in Islamic jurisprudence

Grand Islamic Jurist(s) : *marji'* (pl. *marāji'*), Islamic learned scholar who has reached the highest level in Islamic jurisprudence, and

whom Muslims have started to follow as their authority in jurisprudence

the practical guide of rulings : *risāla 'maliyyah*, the collection of rulings issued by a Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*)

following the Grand Jurist : *taqlīd*, literally 'imitating', i.e. following what the Grand Jurist says in one's Islamic duties, as outlined in the '*risāla 'amaliyyah*'

following more than one Grand Jurist simultaneously: *tab'iḍ*

formulation of rulings : *ijtihād*, the process undertaken by an Islamic Jurist to arrive at a given ruling

Islamically legal : *shar'iyy*, acceptable in Islam or Islamic jurisprudence

Islamic ruling : *fatwā shar'iyyah*, decree issued by learned Islamic scholars or jurists

the primary ruling : *al-ḥukm al-awwalliyy*, the Islamic *fatwā*/ruling according to directly related considerations in normal circumstances

the secondary ruling : *al-ḥukm ath-thānewiyy*, the Islamic *fatwā*/ruling taking into account other considerations or abnormal circumstances

at the primary-level basis (of the ruling) : *al-'unwān al-awwalliyy*, on the basis of a primary ruling

at the secondary-level basis (of the ruling) : *al-'unwān ath-thānewiyy*, on the basis of a secondary ruling (*al-ḥukm ath-thānewiyy*)

allowed : *mubāḥ*, a thing or action that Islam has no objection to, in terms of either dealing with it or doing it; there is neither reward nor retribution attached to doing or not doing it

allowed : *ḥalāl*, a thing or action that Islam accepts, and this may involve reward

prohibited/forbidden : *ḥarām*, a thing or action that Islam prohibits, in terms of either dealing with it or doing it

obligatory : *wājib*, an action that Muslims must carry out

recommended : *mustaḥabb*, an action that, though not obligatory, is recommended by Islam as something that Muslims should do

recommended not to be done : *makrūh*, an action that, though not forbidden, is recommended by Islam as something that Muslims should not do

traditional ruling : *ḥukm mashhur*, a ruling that has been issued by most or all Grand Jurists

the principal standpoint (ruling) : *al-a'ṣl*, a ruling arrived at without additional circumstance-related considerations that would permit exceptions

compelling state : *iḍṭirār*, the state of someone who is forced by circumstances to do something (that is normally forbidden)

intense difficulty : *ḥaraj*, the state that someone will find himself in if he does not do something (that is normally forbidden)

interest(s)/advantage(s) : *ma'ṣlaḥah* (pl. *ma'ṣāliḥ*), a quality which makes something acceptable (that is normally unacceptable or forbidden)

blight(s) (harm causing or spoiling things) : *mafsada*h (pl. *mafāsid*), harm, physical or moral, caused by doing something

restraint : *ḍābiṭ shar'iyy*, the Islamic legal argument/criteria for considering something allowed, forbidden etc

degrading/dishonouring : *hatk al-ḥurmah*, causing dishonour to a person/Muslim as a result of doing something, even if it is not forbidden in other circumstances

obligatory on everyone : *farḍ 'ayn*, something that every Muslim in an area, society or country or even the whole nation has to do or contribute to, otherwise he has not fulfilled his duties

obligation under the conditions of sufficiency : *farḍ kifāyah/wujub kifā'iyy*, if a sufficient number of Muslims in an area, society, country or the whole nation attend to the duty in question, the obligation on the others is no longer applicable

inherently pure : *ṭāhir*, pure in its original state

inherently impure : *najis*, impure in its original state, even if nothing impure touches it or is mixed with it

obligatory precautionary condition : *iḥṭiyāt wujubiyy/aḥwat wujuban*, a ruling that involves doing something, or abstaining from doing something, as a precaution, and Muslims must abide by it

voluntary precautionary condition : *iḥtiyāṭ istiḥbabiyy/aḥwaṭ istiḥbaban*, a ruling that involves doing something, or abstaining from doing something, as a precaution, and Muslims have the choice of abiding by it or not

absolutely/without condition : *muṭlaqan*, can – or cannot – be done under any circumstances

satisfaction : *iṭmi'nān*, the state of being satisfied that something or someone fulfils a given Islamic jurisprudence condition

the area of the (common) test : *maḥal ibtilā'*, the area of activity in life that Muslims are commonly engaged in

common knowledge : *shiyā'*, knowledge regarding something or someone that becomes so widespread in a society that most, if not all, members of society know it

supposition/assumption : *dhann*, the state of not being certain about something, hence the ruling becomes based on an assumption

the move from the land of Islam to the land of atheism : *at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah*

sinful travel : *safar ma'ṣiyah*, travelling for a forbidden cause

shortened prayer : *'ṣalāt al-ka'ṣr*, the four-*rak'ah* prayer that becomes a two-*rak'ah* one during travels

20% Islamic levy : *khums*

the Imam's share : *ḥaqq* al-Imām, half of the *khums*

interest (on money) : *ribā*, charging an additional amount on loans, or giving an additional amount on savings, as is common in the non-Islamic banking system

woman's veil : *ḥijāb*, women's dress or part of a dress that is used to ensure that all parts of the body that must be covered are covered

wearing more than the allowed make-up : *tabarruj*, wearing more make-up than is allowed Islamically

(looking) with pleasure : (*nadhrat*) *talathuth*, looking at members of the opposite sex for (sexual) pleasure

(with) bad intention : *rībah*, looking at or talking with the opposite sex in a non-innocent way

unmarriageable person/persons : *maḥram/maḥārim*, members of one's family and relatives whom one is forbidden to marry, such as mothers, aunts and sons-in-law

term/temporary marriage : *mut'ah/zawāj mu'aqqat*, a marriage that includes a fixed time duration, after the elapse of which it becomes void, without the need for divorce

music/singing of the corrupt people : *alḥān ahlil fusūq*, music/singing that is forbidden in Islam, because it stirs up sexual desires and lust, or includes lyrics of a similar nature

The Question of Expatriation

From the dawn of history, man has always moved from one place to another in pursuit of a living and security. And although it is not easy for him to leave his birthplace and the homeland of his memories, his efforts to search for the means to support his life or for psychological stability or security never vanish so long as he is challenged by the kind of economic hardship or threats to his security that make it necessary for him to seek an 'alternative homeland'.

This does not seem peculiar to the nomadic Bedouin who are constantly looking for water and supply of food, nor is it exceptional for people who are oppressed in their homeland, but this is also the case for those simply seeking a better life. The Holy Qur'ān points to the example of the Israelites in both cases: the economic migration when Allāh, in answer to their request said: **'Go back to a city, and there you will find all you have asked for' 2:61** and **'And remember when We said "Enter this city, and eat as you will to your hearts' content"' 2:58**, and also the migration for reasons of security: **'They said: "O Moses! Verily, there are in it [Palestine] people of might and verily we will never enter it until they get out of it, and if they get out of it, certainly, we will enter"' 5:22.** (This is notwithstanding the negative aspect of their disobedience, and the words of Joseph (as): **'And [he] said: "Enter into Egypt, secure, if Allāh so wills"' 12:99**.) These two fundamental needs are also mentioned in the Chapter of Quraysh: **'He Who fed them against hunger, and secured them against fear' 106:4,** showing their very close relationship.

In spite of life's complexity and the diversity of needs, these two needs have continued to be the prime motives for leaving one

country and moving to another. However, Islam has given emigration a new dimension for Muslims, or let's say it has widened the horizon of the security dimension to embrace also the security of the (Islamic) message itself, and not just that of its bearer. This is what has transferred the concept of emigration from the framework of the individual to its broader message, as emigration 'in Allāh' and 'in the path of Allāh'.

This is what marks the distinction between emigration for the sake of living conditions and emigration for Allāh – for whoever emigrates for Allāh, his reward shall be from Allāh, and whoever emigrates for a reason other than Allāh, his reward shall come from that reason. Emigration, in any case, is not an option that is widely open, for it carries the condition of not weakening one's religion, otherwise it becomes a move from the land of Islam to the land of atheism (*at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah*), and this is forbidden. In other words, the emigrant should at the very least preserve the level of religious observance that he practised before he emigrated, if he is not able to improve upon it.

We should stop here to make a comparison between the first emigration (*hijrah*) and the kind of emigration which takes place in the modern world, so that we can tell where we stand in the light of proper analysis. There are many similarities and differences between the Abyssinia (Ḥabashah) (now Ethiopia) of the past, to which that group of persecuted Muslims, who were amongst the best of the Prophet's companions, made the first emigration, and today's Europe and other lands of emigration; these should be pondered by anyone studying emigration, so as to arrive at a complete picture.

In the History (*sīrah*) of Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, p. 349, Ibn Isḥāq said: 'When the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) saw the hardship (*balā'*) to

which his companions were subjected and the security he enjoyed, owing to his position with Allāh and with his uncle Abu Ṭalib, and that he was unable to prevent what was befalling them, he said to them: **"You should go to the land of Abyssinia (Ḥabashah), for it has a king in whose hands no one suffers injustice, and it is a land of truth, until Allāh gives you relief from this"**; so (some of) the Muslims amongst the companions of the Prophet (sawa) left for Abyssinia for fear of being forced to abandon Islam out of fear of, or because of, persecution (*fitnah*), and so they run away to Allāh with their religion (intact); this was the first emigration in Islam.'

From this narration, we can see that the reason for this emigration was the hardship (*balā'*) to which the Muslims were subjected, for fear of being forced to abandon Islam out of fear of, or because of, persecution (*fitnah*), and so they run away to Allāh with their religion (intact). In addition, we can learn from what Ummu Salamah, the Prophet's wife, said about this emigration: 'When we landed in Abyssinia, our neighbour (an-Najāshiyy, the king of the country) was the best of neighbours – our religion was safe, and we worshipped Allāh the Most High without being harmed or hearing anything that we did not like.' She explains the issue of preserving the religion, and the importance of the freedom to worship and security.

This is how the poet 'Abdullah bin al-Ḥārith, one of the first emigrants, expressed it:

We have found the land of Allāh wide open,

Saving us from humiliation and belittlement.

So do not put up with humiliation in life and

Shame after death and a dangerous disgrace.

He is pointing to an important reason for emigration: rejecting the option of staying in a state of humiliation, especially given that Allāh wants the believer to be strong in all circumstances: **'But strength belongs to Allāh and to His Apostle and to the believers' 63:8.**

Notes on the first emigration:

1- In the first emigration, there were women as well as men, so it was undertaken by those capable of both sexes.

2- The emigrants included members of honourable and well-known families from among the Quraysh, not just little-known people.

3- Relative to the number of believers at the time, the number of emigrants was large – around 83 people, not counting young children.

4- There was no intention to emigrate for good, i.e. to make Abyssinia an alternative homeland to Mecca, for the emigrants had made up their minds to return to their country when it became safe to do so and when the balance tipped to Islam's favour, and this is seen in the Prophet's words **'until Allāh gives for you relief from this'.**

5- The land of emigration was chosen after careful research and according to conditions that would satisfy the emigrants' need of safety for their religion and in their worship of Allāh, and preservation from harm or from hearing what the emigrants would not like to hear from people of the land to which they had emigrated. This offers us a lesson in choosing the country which fulfils at least some of the conditions: Ummu Salamah said, 'When we landed in Abyssinia, our

neighbour (an-Najāshiyy, the king of the country) was the best of neighbours.'

6- The land of emigration – wherever it is – can never be regarded as completely safe, for the enemy continued to lie in wait for the emigrants, even in the land of emigration. History tells us that the Quraysh pursued the Prophet's companions: 'When the Quraysh found that the companions of the messenger of Allāh (sawa) had become safe and secure in Abyssinia, and that they had found shelter and stability, they conspired to send two strong men from the Quraysh to an-Najāshiyy to (ask him) to turn them over to them, so that they could force them out of their religion and out of the land in which they found safety and security.'

If we study the reality of emigration today, we find many similar examples. Persecution and the pursuit of emigrants in the land of emigration have taken many different forms, including assassination - such as the assassination of the martyr Sayyid Mahdiyy al-Ḥakīm in Sudan and the martyr Sahl as-Salmān in the Emirates. Similarly two Iraqi students were handed over by the French authorities to Saddam's regime in an undeniable conspiracy. This is in addition to surveillance operations, as the documents addressed to the (Iraqi) National Union (of Students) in Britain have revealed, conducted for the purpose of writing reports about the religious people there.

That said, yesterday's Abyssinia bears only a partial resemblance to today's Europe, for the latter is not the land where you can be (absolutely) sure about the safety of your religion or the absolute freedom of worship, nor is it the land where emigrants are not harmed or where they do not hear what they would not like to hear, nor are their kings and presidents innocent of inflicting injustices on

people, nor are their countries the land of truth to which believers can escape with their religion. There are fundamental differences between today's Abyssinia – if we can regard Europe as a second Abyssinia, something which we have reservations about – and yesterday's Abyssinia, but what concerns us here is to benefit from the experience of the first emigration as follows:

1- The first emigrants moved towards the highest levels in that their call to Islam was not pitched at the ordinary people of Abyssinia, but rather they went to the king (himself) and engaged with him in a dialogue about belief which transcended sensitive belief issues that normally divide rather than bring people together. History narrates that the emigrants' leader Ja'far bin abī Ṭālib argued, with an-Najāshiyy, that the reason for their emigration was: 'When they oppressed us, inflicted injustice on us, made life difficult for us and stood between us and (performing) our religion, we left for your country and chose you before all the others.' These words 'we chose you before all the others' point to the meaning that we mentioned above. In talking to an-Najāshiyy, Ja'far compared their situation before Islam (in *Jāhilliyyah*) with the new life that the Prophet (sawa) had introduced through the exalted Islamic religion.

2- It is important to find an appropriate dialogue that is in harmony with the other point of view, i.e. starting from the 'common word' (*al-kalimah as-sawā'*) which the Holy Qur'ān uses: **'Say: "O people of the Book, let us come to a common word (agreement) between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh, that we will associate none other with Him and none of us shall set up mortals as**

> **deities besides Allāh'" 3:64**. When an-Najāshiyy asked Ja'far about what the Prophet was delivering from Allāh, he read from the Chapter of Mary (as) and an-Najāshiyy and his bishops cried, and he said: 'This and what Jesus came with come out from the same lamp.' This provides proof of the value of starting from common points when opening up to others, so that we may at least neutralise them if we cannot succeed in winning them over.

Emigration, according to Imam 'Alī (as), is like it has always been, and when emigrants fulfil their responsibilities towards the Message – as Ja'far and his companions did – then instead of being secondary details concerning emigration jurisprudence, they become an obligatory work of propagation that will be highly rewarded by Allāh, and of great results and effects. In a similar way, didn't the Muslim merchants of the first stage take their message with their merchandise wherever they went?

When we embark on an objective study of a very important issue such as emigration and asylum, we cannot overlook the effect of the environment on man, something that has been confirmed by researchers and authorities in sociology and upbringing; it is even said that 'man is the product of his environment', i.e. he will definitely be affected by it – positively or negatively. The very few exceptions are those who are aware of and recognise the dangers of being influenced by the environment and of doing whatever others do, and who choose for themselves another path that protects them from the evils of falling and blind following.

For every rule there are exceptions: a person may live in the care of a righteous person but not get anything from his righteousness, but the opposite is more generally true. The Qur'ān confirms that the social

environment in which a person is brought up or lives his life has an influential effect, and this may call for an exceptional effort of resistance. Here are two examples from the Qur'ān that show how a person living in a deviant environment, or one in which his religion weakens, can free himself from this by God-fearing (*taqwā*), which means loving Him, fearing Him and deriving hope from Him.

In the story of Joseph (as), he is in the house of the first minister (*al-'Azīz*) of Egypt – a royal house where there is everything you desire. 'In a beautiful royal palace, with scenes which dazzle the eyes and speak of a comfortable life; Joseph could have used this mixing (of men and women) and love (of the first minister's wife) to achieve many life-wishes of rule, strength and riches, for these are powerful things which can break a mountain down or make a solid rock melt.' *Al-Mīzān*, Ṭabātabā'iyy, vol. 12, p. 126.

This is an example from men. From women, the Qur'ān provides the example of the Pharaoh's wife, Asyah bint Muzāḥim. In spite of all the luxury, glory and other features of the Pharaonic palace that present a most beautiful image of life, especially given that she was 'Egypt's first lady', she did not fall prey to temporal possessions or her relaxed and lavish environment. She asked Allāh for a house in Paradise and to save her from the Pharaoh and his deeds and from the unjust people: 'She chose the nearness of Allāh over being the Pharaoh's mate and mistress and being the Queen of Egypt, and preferred a house which her Lord builds for her over the house of the Pharaoh, which had all that the souls of men want and their hearts desire and the hopes aspire to. She rejected the beauty of the life she was leading, and which had been made available to her, and instead looked up to what her Lord provided in reward and nearness,

and she believed in the unseen (*ghayb*) and kept on the right path of her belief until death.' *Al-Mīzān*, Tabāṭabā'iyy, vol. 28, p. 344.

Here are two role models to draw on, for men and women alike. They present the image of the believer who lives in an environment that is submerged in all the lavishness life can offer, but who rejects it and keeps his or her balance in the face of all that, preferring Allāh's satisfaction with him or her and the righteousness that He treasures.

Europe, and other places of emigration, even if they are as described by some as God's paradise on earth, cannot be compared to the palace of Egypt's first minister or Pharaoh's palace, with all their suggestions of seduction, deviation and forgetting the Hereafter; nonetheless, the (strong) awareness and belief of Joseph (as) and Asyah stood like a dam against all that and they did not indulge in or go along with. And what attracts the attention here is that both of them used – as a weapon of resistance – the refuge of Allāh the Most High: Joseph asks for refuge in Him and help to save him from the cunning ways of the friends of the first minister's wife, and Asyah asks for refuge in Him to save her from Pharaoh, his deeds and people. (This tells us that) however strong the believer's resolve and self-control, he cannot be safe from the cunning ways of Satan and the desires of the soul that encourage him to commit bad deeds, and therefore he needs, in order to fight this, divine support to protect his belief and shield him from whatever could make him fall or deviate from the right path.

That said, the refugee is not in any way encouraged to live in isolation from the environment, for although the obstacles to integration are numerous, being a Muslim means that you have to contribute positively to the host society, and part of this is through explaining Islam to the others. This calls for learning the language

and perfecting it in speaking and writing, for without giving this the priority it deserves achieving the minimum of social interconnection becomes impossible, not to mention the task of changing the opinions and thoughts that non-Muslims hold about Muslims. The other person in such contacts may be a near neighbour, a language teacher, colleague, university professor, member of parliament, Christian priest or just an ordinary person who hears about Islam but does not know anything about it, or knows a few incomplete and vague things about it and wishes to know the complete, clear picture. Even the call to establish Islamic or Arab pressure groups (lobbies) cannot be achieved without this condition of language-learning, amongst the many other conditions, that come into play – such as knowing the fundamentals and manners of dialogue and how to deal with others with openness and with confidence in what is in question, without the least fanaticism, emotional response, slander or belittling of what the other parties hold.

In addition, the western media which opposes Islam and Muslim issues and which supports their enemies rarely finds anyone who will stand up to it to correct the false information about Islam and Muslims which it broadcasts or propagates. It may also be said that this media is – by nature – partial and not neutral and does not respond positively to the Islamic ideas and viewpoints; it also fragments any dialogue that it may have with Muslims to extract what it wants from it and whatever conforms to its agenda. However, this, and other obstacles, should not stop Muslims practising the role of correcting, explaining and participating in opinion, whether about a political issue that concerns one's country, or a social issue related to the life of Muslims, or any other cultural or educational issue.

Any observer of the volume of emigration from the original countries to Europe will have noticed that the number of people emigrating for economic and security reasons is rising and accelerating, to the extent that some are prepared to risk their lives as the price of escaping the 'hell' of a homeland that is ruled by the tools of oppression, terrorism and persecution, under unjust and aggressive regimes that care nothing for the people of that homeland – a factor that also explains the increase in the number of emigrants who are experts or specialists in their fields, bringing some countries to the brink of crisis because of the severe shortage of scientific and specialist know-how needed to run the institutions and development projects in those countries ruled by dictatorships. Organisations monitoring refugee movement have witnessed an increase in the numbers of emigrants from various specialist fields other than the scientific. Many scholars of literature, writers, journalists, researchers, university teachers, artists and experts in other sectors have decided that to stay in their homeland is effectively to have a death sentence imposed on their capabilities, through the withdrawal of freedoms by the ruling power and its close circle of followers.

(However,) it is a mistake to think that freedom in European places of emigration is always available, or that it matches up to the slogans of these countries, which reveal their double standards. In France, for instance, there are four million Muslims and Islam is the second religion, but there are only 1600-1700 places of worship, most of which are quite basic and do not satisfy the official criteria; there are only 6-10 big mosques in the whole of France. And if France boasts of its respect for the Charter of Human Rights, French Muslims themselves, not to mention the non-French Muslims, suffer from intellectual persecution: the French thinker Roger Garudy stood trial before the French judicial system and his freedom of thought was

denied because he is a Muslim, and the Islamic women's dress *(ḥijāb)* is forbidden (in schools), while non-Muslims have the right to perform their rituals freely. This is in addition to opposing Islam's rituals, such as the slaughtering of animals in the *ʿĪd of al-Aḍḥa*, and in addition to handing over two Iraqi Muslim students to the ruling regime in Baghdad in an undeniable conspiracy with the French secret services. And every time a European country is beset by an economic crisis, you see the opposition parties raise the refugee issue as one of the causes of the crisis and calls to stop accepting refugees, and for various measures to make life difficult for them.

And if a Swedish poet thanked the refugee for choosing Sweden from among all other countries that offered him safety, this is only one poet's feeling; otherwise ask the emigrants in Sweden – especially those who have black hair and brown complexion – about racial discrimination and the disgraceful response of the Swedish people to the opposition parties that persuade them that unemployment and other problems are caused by refugees, who compete with them for their bread and butter.

Despite this discouraging atmosphere, not a single day passes without hearing and reading about the emigration of people who risk their lives to do so: and now we have started to hear about 'the boats of death' carrying refugees, who get horribly exploited and taken advantage of due to their tragic circumstances. Newspapers have published photographs of some of the victims of these boats, and what is not known is worse.

Whoever reads Ghassān Kanafānī's novel *Rijāl fish-Shams* (*Men under the Sun*) will not find these events strange, nor how it is that some emigrants will risk their lives to cross their homeland borders to get to a desired refuge. While Kanafānī's heroes died in an enclosed tank,

melting in extreme heat of the sun, the 'refugee heroes' of today die in different ways. The strange thing is that this does not stop the continued flow of emigration, which indeed is intensifying in line with the growth of injustice and impoverishment in the countries that inflict injustice and terror on their citizens.

In response to this painful and growing phenomenon, it is imperative that careful and comprehensive studies are undertaken to look at all the causes, manifestations, results, methods of prevention and remedies. Indeed, many books have been published based on such studies: some deal with the phenomenon from a purely social perspective, others from a purely political perspective, and others still by looking at some of the issues of jurisprudence in the areas of what is allowed and forbidden.

Speaking for myself, I have not found a single study that deals with all of these aspects, beginning with the foundations in jurisprudence (as opposed to questions of food, drink and transactions), and dealing with the question of emigration in all its dimensions – the intellectual, cultural and current social dimensions – and seeking to discover the Islamic legal position regarding the individual, social, political, economic and security complexities of emigration and the relationships with others – both on individual as well as institutional bases.

Thus, this book *Emigration and Expatriation* (*al-Hijrah wal-Ightirāb*) is not a repeat of other works in this field, but a qualitative addition. To do it, I have taken the following steps, which have helped me to formulate the framework of the subject at hand:

1- Engaging in dialogue with a Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*) and an Islamic thinker who has offered his solutions to the problem at hand.

2- Benefiting from those with experience and those specialists in their fields who have suffered from expatriation and know its problems.

3- Benefiting from the ideas expressed in published books in this field.

4- Preparing appendices that cover the emigration issue, with words of guidance to emigrants in all places of expatriation, and answering questions raised by expatriates.

As for the dialogue, I had a long dialogue and discussion with his Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh, covering the vital issues of emigration and asylum. My request from him had been to have answers not in a questionnaire form, but sufficient to establish the foundations for an Islamic outlook to emigration jurisprudence, by means of an intellectual-jurisprudence discussion that attempted to delve into the problem from the inside, and not to merely treat it superficially. The success of this endeavour can be judged by the refugee reader himself – whether or not he has found what he is looking for in this book.

As for the specialists and people with expertise, I have had help from a number of refugee brothers in different countries of emigration through meeting them on the page of *Al-Mawqif* magazine, under the title of '*Al-Mahjar, Humūm wa Qadāya*' (*The Place of Emigration, its Problems and Issues*), and through communication by speech or writing with a number of scholars who have spared no effort in supplying me with the questions which are central to the problem. I benefited a lot – in this regard – from my dear brother Mr. Ja'far 'Abdul Razzāq, supervisor to the Iraqi Cultural Society in Holland, who visited me in Damascus and entered into dialogue with me and his Eminence over

the issues (some of which I had presented to his Eminence, and he (Mr. Razzāq) enriched them), and over other issues of which I would not have been aware without his fruitful and much appreciated cooperation.

Also, I was helped in this project by Dr. Walīd al-Ḥilliyy from London, UK, who supplied me with questions concerning general and fundamental problems from which emigrants suffer, thus adding new problems to my 'problem bank'.

As far as books are concerned, I benefited from what is available in the field: a book by Mr. Ḥasan Shubbar, another by Mr. Al-Fatlī, *Risālah Abawiyyah* (*A Fatherly Letter*) and *Al-Fiqh Lil Mughtaribīn* by his Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Ḥakīm.

The appendices of this book, which are part and parcel of the book and not a mere addition, are arranged as follows:

1- Emigrational studies by his Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh, published in various periodicals.

2- Jurisprudence queries, divided into:

   a- Chosen queries, prepared by me for him to answer, according to his rulings.

   b- Queries by his followers all over the world, derived from the Jurisprudence Archive of Ḥawzatul Murtaḍā, Damascus, after checking all queries concerning refugees that were sent to his Eminence's office.

3- I have benefited also from the fatherly words and valuable words of guidance and precious advice that his Eminence has

> sent to emigrants in various countries, so that they might become available to refugees in other countries, for although there are many places of emigration and expatriation, they share many points in common.

This book discusses the concepts of emigration and expatriation on the basis that the first concerns leaving one's homeland from a Qur'ānic point of view, and the latter concerns a decision in which the move is not considered as an emigration to Allāh. But combining the two concepts, which have a common nature but different goals, has become an imperative.

I have to point out that the jurisprudence of the place of emigration and expatriate jurisprudence are also matters of concern and study by others who are concerned about the Islamic legalities. While I was preparing this book, a jurisprudence meeting was held in Dublin, Ireland, on 11 October 1998 by the Islamic Cultural Centre there. It was attended by many Muslim scholars from European, Arab and Muslim countries, and the matters under discussion were various Islamic legal questions and jurisprudence issues that are a matter of concern to Islamic communities across Europe.

According to the *Ashsharq al-Awṣat* newspaper, the goal of that meeting was to find common ground for Muslim scholars in Europe, so as to unify their points of view and to narrow the areas of dispute in the important jurisprudence rulings in Europe. Another goad was to issue combined legal rulings which fulfil the needs of Muslim communities in Europe and answer their queries and questions, and which improve their relationship with European society, and to help structure their social, cultural, economic and political relationships.

Finally, I must express my thanks, love and prayers to everyone who has helped me or contributed in any way in this book. In particular, I

thank his Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh for the time he gave me from his very busy schedule and for the enlightenment of his luminous thinking. Also, I thank my dear brothers Mr. Ja'far 'Abdul Razzāq and Dr. Walīd al-Ḥilliyy for their faithful cooperation.

I ask Allāh to accept this effort from me, for he is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing, and all gratitude is to Allāh the Lord of the worlds.

'Ādil al-Qādı

Damascus

15 Shawwāl 1419H – 1 February 1999

Qur'ānic Verses

Emigration seeking Allāh's mercy

'Verily, those who believed and those who emigrated and fought (struggled) in the way of Allāh, these are they who rightly hope for the Mercy of Allāh and Allāh is Forgiving, All-Merciful.' 2:218

The reward of emigration

'They, therefore, who emigrated and were driven from their homes and suffered persecution in My way and who fought and were slain, I will most certainly forgive their sins, and I will most certainly admit them to gardens beneath which flow streams; a reward from Allāh! And Allāh verily with Him is the richest reward.' 3:194

'And as for the foremost, the first of the *Muhājirūn* (emigrants) and the *Anṣār* (supporters), and those who nobly followed them, Allāh is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which flow rivers, where they shall dwell forever; that is the supreme triumph.' 9:100

'Allāh turned in mercy unto the Apostle, and the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār* who followed him in the hour of distress after the hearts of a part of them had nearly swerved from duty; but He turned unto them also in mercy; verily unto them He is Compassionate, Most Merciful.' 9:117

Emigration is a sign of allegiance

'Verily those who believed and emigrated and strove (fought) with their properties and their selves in the way of Allāh, and those who gave shelter and helped, these are the guardians of one another (have allegiance to one another); and those who believed and did not

emigrate, not yours is their guardianship (allegiance) until they emigrate, and if they seek help from you in any matter of religion, then upon you is incumbent their help, save against a people between you and them be a covenant; and verily Allāh sees all that you do.' 8:72

'They would have you disbelieve as they themselves have disbelieved, so that you may be all alike; therefore take no friends among them until they emigrate in Allāh's way; but if they turn back, then cease them and put them to death wherever you find them, and take none of them as friends, nor as helpers.' 4:89

Emigration is a sign of faith

'And those who believed and emigrated and strove (fought) in the way of Allāh, and those who gave shelter and helped, those are the true believers, for them is forgiveness and a gracious provision. And those who believed (embraced the Faith) later and emigrated and strove with you, they are of you; and the blood relations are nearer to each other in the Book of Allāh; verily in everything Allāh is All-Knowing.' 8:74,75

'O you who believe! When come unto you believing women as emigrants, then test them; Allāh knows best their faith; and if you find them to be believing women, do not return them to the infidels; they are not lawful to them (the infidels), nor are they (the infidels) lawful to them; and give them what they have spent, and no blame be on you in marrying them when you pay them their dowries; and do not hold onto your marriages to the infidel women, demand what you have spent, and let them demand what they have spent; this is the decree of Allāh; He enforces it among you; and Allāh is All-Knowing, the All-Wise.' 60:10

Emigration is winning

'Those who believed (in Allāh) and emigrated, and strove (fought) in the way of Allāh with their properties and their selves are held in higher regard by Allāh; and they are the winners.' 9:20

'And those who emigrated in the cause of Allāh after they have been oppressed, certainly we will give them good recompense in this world; and certainly the reward in the hereafter is greater, if they but knew it.' 16:41

'And verily the Lord, unto those who emigrate after they are persecuted, then they struggle hard (fight) for Allāh's cause and exercise patience, verily your Lord, after that, is Forgiving and Most Merciful.' 16:110

Emigration is prosperity

'And those who emigrate in the way of Allāh and are then slain or die, certainly will Allāh provide them with an excellent sustenance; and verily, Allāh is the Best of providers.' 22:58

'And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance; and he that leaves his dwelling and emigrates in the way of Allāh and His Messenger and is then overtaken by death, shall (certainly) be rewarded by Allāh; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.' 4:100

Emigration from the land of oppressors

'The angels will ask those whom they carry off while steeped in sin: "What were you doing?" We were oppressed in the land, they will reply; they will say: "Was not the earth of Allāh spacious enough for you to emigrate?" Hell shall be their home; a bad fate.' 4:97

Emigration to Allāh

'Lot believed in him, and he said: "I will emigrate and go where my Lord bids me; verily He is the Mighty, the All-Wise."' 29:26

Care for emigrants

'Let not the rich and honourable among you swear to withhold their gifts from their kindred, the destitute, and the emigrants in the way of Allāh, rather let them pardon and forgive; do you not wish Allāh to forgive you? Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.' 24:22

'The Prophet has a greater claim on the believers than they have on themselves; and his wives are their mothers; and Allāh ordains that blood relations are closer to one another than to other believers or emigrants (*Muhājirūn*), although you are permitted to do your friends a kindness; that is decreed in the Book.' 33:6

'A share of the spoils shall also fall to the poor emigrants who have been driven from their homes and their possessions, who seek Allāh's grace and bounty and who help Allāh and His Apostle; these are the true believers.' 59:8

Ḥadīth Narrations

(All the following narrations are taken from Mīzān al-Hikmah, Muḥammad Raīshahriyy, p.296-308.)

Oppression is a cause for emigration

Az-Zuhriyy narrated: 'When the number of Muslims increased and the faith emerged and people started talking about it, a lot of Qurayshī polytheists responded by torturing and imprisoning the believers from their tribes, and wanted to force them out of their religion; so the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) said to them: "Spread out across the earth". They asked: where shall we go O Messenger of Allāh?. He said: "There" and pointed to the land of Abyssinia, and this was the best choice for him for emigration. So, many Muslims set out for that land, some with their families, others on their own, until they arrived in Abyssinia.'

Emigration to Allāh and His Messenger

'When the Prophet's companions returned to Mecca after their first emigration, their people treated them badly and their tribes made their lives difficult and they were subjected to a great harm. So, the Messenger of Allāh gave them his permission to return to the land of Abyssinia once again, but this time it was harder and they were subjected to intense rebuke and harm by the Quraysh. It was hard for them (the Quraysh) to accept what they heard about the an-Najāshiyy's good treatment of the emigrants. 'Uthmān bin 'Affān said: O Messenger of Allāh, that was our first emigration and this is the second, and you are not with us? The Messenger of Allāh said: "You are emigrating to Allāh, not to me – both of these emigrations are for you', 'Uthmān said: Then this is enough for us, O Messenger of Allāh.'

No emigration after the Conquest (of Mecca)

The Messenger (sawa) said: 'No emigration after the Conquest'.

The Messenger (sawa) said: 'No emigration after the Conquest, only belief, intention and (hard) struggle (*jihād*).'

Emigration will not cease

The Messenger (sawa) said: 'O people! Emigrate and hold steadfastly to your Islam, for emigration will not cease so long as there is (hard) struggle (*jihād*).'

Junādah bin Umayyah al-Azdiyy said: 'We emigrated in the time of the Prophet (sawa), then we had a dispute over emigration: some of us said 'it has ceased' and some of us said 'it has not ceased', so we went to the Messenger of Allāh and asked him about it; he answered: "Emigration does not cease so long as there are atheists to be fought."'

Emigration's horizons

Imam 'Alī (as) said: 'Emigration will (always) be as it was in the first stage, so long as there is proof (Imam) (*ḥujjah*) – whether it involves those concealing their faith, or are open about it; the term emigration is not relevant to anyone unless he knows the proof (*ḥujjah*) on earth, so whoever knows it (him) and admits to it, then he is an emigrant; and (the term) "deemed weak" cannot be used for anyone who has known the proof (*ḥujjah*); his ears have heard about it and his heart has recognised it.'

Imam al-Bāqir (as): 'Whoever embraces Islam without pressure is an emigrant.'

Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as): 'Whoever was born into Islam is an Arab, and whoever embraced it after he became an adult is an emigrant.'

The Messenger (sawa): 'Emigration is two (emigrations): one of them is to abandon bad deeds, and the other is to emigrate to Allāh Most High and His Messenger, and emigration does not cease as long as repentance is acceptable.'

The reward of the deceased emigrant will be given

Al-'Ayyāshiyy narrated that Muḥammad bin abī 'Umaīr said that Muḥammad bin Ḥakīm told him: 'Zarārah bin A'yon sent his son 'Ubayd to Medina to get news of Abī al-Ḥasan Musā bin Ja'far (as) and 'Abdullāh, but he died before his son 'Ubaīd returned.'

Muḥammad bin abī 'Umaīr said that Muḥammad bin Ḥakīm said: 'I mentioned to Abi al-Ḥassan (as) how Zarārah sent his son 'Ubaīd to Medina; he said: "I surely hope that Zarārah is amongst those whom Allāh described: And who leaves his home, emigrating to Allāh...."'

The best form of emigration

The Messenger (sawa): 'The best form of emigration is to abandon what Allāh hates.'

The Messenger (sawa): 'The best form of emigration is to abandon bad (deeds).'

The Prophet (sawa) said to Umm Anas: 'Abandon sins, for this is the best form of emigration.'

The Messenger (sawa): 'The most honourable form of emigration is abandoning sins.'

The Prophet (sawa) was asked: 'What is the best form of faith?; he said: 'Emigration'; (so) he was asked: 'What is emigration?'; he said: 'Abandoning bad (deeds); (so) he was asked: 'Then which emigration is the best?'; he said: 'The (hard) struggle (*jihād*).'

The Messenger (sawa): 'Emigration is two (emigrations): the emigration of the urban person and the emigration of the Bedouin.

The emigration of the Bedouin is to answer when called (for *jihād*) and obey when ordered, and the emigration of the urban person is greater in hardship and greater in reward.'
The Messenger (sawa): 'Perform the prayer, give the (religious) tax, abandon bad (deeds), live in the land of your people whenever you like – and you are (still) an emigrant.'
The Messenger (sawa): 'The best form of Islam is when Muslims are saved from your tongue and hand, and the best form of emigration is when you abandon what your Lord hates.'

Better than emigration

The Messenger (sawa): 'The position of anyone of you in life speaking in truth to drive away falsehood, or supporting a truth, is better than an emigration with me.'

Emigration from the land of oppressors

In Al-Qummiyy's Qur'ān commentary (*tafsīr*), the narration of Abi al-Jārūd that Abī Ja'far (as) said regarding the Qur'ānic verse 'O my worshippers who have believed...': 'Do not obey corrupt kings; and when you become afraid that they may force you out of your (level of observing) religion: "then my land is spacious"; He says: "What were you doing?" "We were oppressed in the land", they will reply. Then he would say: "Was not the earth of Allāh spacious enough for you to fly for refuge?"'
In Majma' al-Bayān's Qur'ān commentary, regarding the verse: 'O my worshippers who have believed...' Abu 'Abdillāh (as): 'If Allāh was disobeyed in a land you are in, leave it for another.'
The Messenger (sawa): 'Who escapes with his religion from one land to another, even if it was one span of the hand of land, will certainly

win paradise and be the companion of Ibraham (as) and Muḥammad (sawa).'

No living outside the Islamic land after emigration

Amongst the advice of the Prophet (sawa) to 'Alī (as): 'There is no living outside the Islamic land after emigration.'

The Messenger (sawa): 'There is no living outside the Islamic land after emigration, and no emigration after the (Mecca) Conquest.'

Musā bin Ja'far (as) narrated from his fathers (as) that the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) said: 'I have nothing to do with any Muslim who lives with polytheists in the land of infidelity.'

Chapter 1

The Qur'anic Concept of Emigration

The Concept of Emigration in the Qur'an

The Qur'anic Categorisation of Emigration

The Concept of Emigration in the Qur'ān

(A lecture by Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh as an introduction to a letter of guidance for emigrants and expatriates.)

The issue of emigration (*hijrah*) as a Qur'ānic concept – and as an essential Islamic concept – focuses on a single central concern, but it brings into play a number of other issues including aspects of belief, values, and life in general – in all its political, personal, social, economic and security dimensions. Living in a particular country might become difficult, for instance, if those who are running it pressurize their citizens to deviate from their belief.

They might find their personal security under threat, or be subjected to political or social persecution, to the extent that their very existence in that country becomes problematic, and challenges all their causes and interests. In such cases, emigration may be the only way out of the dilemma, and the only way to solve their problems. Relocation could provide the opportunity to regain their strength and their belief in themselves, their causes and their country.

And while we emphasise (the value of) the relationship between people and the land in which they were born, raised and lived, and where all their relationships moved dynamically in its (land) domain, we weigh the value of the homeland in its relationship with the people. A free land produces free people, and it gives them the freedom to make their own decisions and plan their own lives alongside others, but in occupied lands, the oppressed people have no power to control their lives or to decide their fate, or to choose how they will make a living or to practise their political or social pursuits as they would wish.

Therefore, when a land cannot support and nurture its people, it is all too natural that they will want to move to another country. This is

what the Commander of the Faithful (as) was referring to when he emphasised the relationship between the land as a value and its people in their dynamic movement in life; the Imam (as) said: **'No country is more entitled to you than another: the best country is the one that supports you.'**

In light of this, we may consider that the Qur'ānic verses regard emigration as obligatory under certain circumstances, and also as an opportunity for individuals to resolve their problems and affairs, since emigration permits them to live within broader horizons than was possible in their own country.

Regarding the first supposition, Allāh the Most High said: 'The angels will ask those whom they carry off while steeped in sin: ''What were you doing?'' We were oppressed in the land, they will reply; they will say: ''Was not the earth of **Allāh** spacious enough for you to emigrate?'' Hell shall be their home; a bad fate. **Except those who are (really) weak and oppressed – men, women and children, who have no means in their power, nor (a guide) to direct their way. For these, there is hope that Allāh will pardon them: for Allāh is Pardoning and Forgiving.'''** 4:97-99.

Allāh the Most High emphasises, in this verse, that the inherent weakness in man does not justify his submission to arrogant adversaries who oppress the people in this or that country. By succumbing to the oppressors, they join the line of deviation, and distance themselves from Allāh the Most High. They may, on the other hand, be able to proceed from this position of weakness to a position of strength in another country, where they can have their freedom, regain or develop strength in themselves, and acquire the ability to confront the adversaries, and perhaps may later return to

their country and give it strength through their own efforts and the efforts of the others.

Allāh does not accept weakness as a justification for deviation, succumbing to failure or abandoning vital causes, if an individual is able to transform this weakness to strength even if through emigration. Therefore, Islam stresses the obligation (on Muslims) to emigrate from a land of atheism or a land of aberration where beliefs or values are threatened by adversaries – who may attempt to turn them into atheists or to make them deviate or to go astray – provided that they have the freedom of movement.

However, the Holy Qur'ān makes an exception from all this: those deemed weak (by the arrogant forces) who do not have any chance of getting out of the position of weakness – **'who have no means in their power, nor (a guide) to direct their way'** – and so have no chance or getting out of that country and have no opportunity of opening up to a way in which they can carry out their duty of calling (others) to the right path, on account of the pressures that control them, **'there is hope that Allāh will pardon them'**, for they are not capable of escaping that tunnel, at the end of which there is not even a glimmer of light.

The positive view of emigration

As for the wider aspect of the philosophy of emigration and talking about the positive side of it, Allāh says: **'And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance'** 4:100. This part of the verse shows that the person for whom his life in his country – his income and the opportunity to carry out propagation work in the path of Allāh and his obedience – become harder to achieve, emigration for him shall be his chance to enter the wider arena and wider horizons and access

the many opportunities by which he can lighten the pressures that surround him.

Therefore, Islam does not view emigration in a negative way, rather it holds a positive view of it and, perhaps, this view proceeds from the basis that Islam does not want the person to imprison himself within his country but to open up to the many humanistic arenas in which he can find the scientific, political, social, economic and security opportunities that he cannot find in his own country, and also to enrich himself through the emigration of different people with different powers, knowledge and positions. This is because Allāh the Most High has made 'knowing one another' the basis of the relations between humans – who are different in their nationalities, race and culture – through each party giving to and taking from the experience of others, and this is what Allāh said in: **'O Men, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you might get to know one another; the noblest of you in Allāh' sight is he who is most God-fearing (righteous); Allāh is All-Knowing and All-Wise.'** 49:13.

Hence, if 'knowing one another' is the basis for the meeting between an idiosyncrasy of one nation or family and that of another, it is only natural in this case that man should move, as an individual or group, to acquire the opportunity of 'knowing one another' with another individual or group.

The Holy Qur'ān emphasizes the great benefit of emigration if it has its Islamic legal justifications that open up to positions of Allāh's satisfaction, His obedience and the arenas of struggle in his path; Allāh the Most High says: **'And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance; and he that leaves his dwelling and emigrates in the way of Allāh and His Messenger and is then overtaken by**

death, shall (certainly) be rewarded by Allāh; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful' 4:100, for he has been in (the realm) of obedience to Allāh and his path, just as if when he died in the battle.

Islam emphasizes the emigration issue as a vital, positive issue which can preserve a man's freedom if his freedom and dignity cannot be preserved but through emigration. Allāh the Most High told us about the oppressed Muslims in Mecca **'who say: "Deliver us, our Lord, from this city, whose people are oppressors, and raise for us from you one who will protect, and raise for us from you one who will help."'** 4:75. These oppressed people were being forced to leave their religion and were struggling very hard to contend with numerous pressures, boycotts, humiliation and torture and this was why they opened up to Allāh the Most High to ask him to provide for them a supportive power **'And raise for us from you one who will help.'**

Allāh told us about the pressures that made those (Muslims) to leave their country, rather reluctantly, since they would have loved to stay and to maintain the religious adherence to which they had joined and belonged, were it not for the pressures of the polytheists: **'Those who have been unjustly driven from their homes, only because they said: "Our Lord is Allāh"'** 22:40. Allāh the Most High ordained the emigration, by which the Muslims proceeded from Mecca to Medina so that they would become a power for Islam in its new arena, with a great reward of dignity.

These are some of the Qur'ānic verses that talk about emigration in a positive way. In the honourable *ḥadith* (Prophetic sayings), it was narrated that 'Surely Allāh likes expatriation in the search for income.' The person whose *rizq* (Allāh's bounty to him) has become scarce in his country, and who emigrates to another country to search of more *rizq*, will receive Allāh's love for that. Naturally, the *rizq* here

is not limited to one thing, rather it represents one type of need; therefore, if the person emigrates in search of knowledge or to call for Allāh, or to gain political or economic opportunities that are related to his nation's strength and his dignity, he will certainly gain Allāh's love, for he is moving in the path which Allāh accepts and He loves whoever follows it.

The negative aspects of emigration

These are the general aspects of the positive sides of emigration in Islam. As for the negative aspects, a person's emigration may take him from the land of Islam to a land of infidelity where he cannot preserve his religion, humanity, strength and dignity – Allāh does not accept this. The (religious) scholars ruled – and we approve their ruling – that emigration is forbidden (*ḥaram*) if it involves going to any country in which (the person's) religion will weaken, in that the person would not be able to preserve his religion and his level of adherence to the intellectual or belief aspects of his religion, or to preserve his family's religion in their upbringing, (religious) practice and adherence – for Allāh demands that a man protects himself and his family from Fire, in His words: **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones'** 66:6. Thus, if protecting himself and his family from Fire cannot be achieved except by staying in his country and not emigrating to this or that infidel or deviant country, then a man must stay and travelling (i.e. emigrating) is forbidden. It was narrated that there is a prohibition against leaving the land of Islam for the land of infidelity, in the sense that travel to such locations would make a man ignorant of his religion and not adhere to it, since (permitted) emigration represents the Islamic position which (should) enrich one's Islamic belief and deeds.

Therefore, if emigrating from the land of Islam to a land of infidelity leads to a weakness in religion and deviation in belief and balance then it is Islamically forbidden. However, if the emigration does not lead to that, but rather that the emigrant finds an opportunity to propagate Islam and to strengthen it in himself, other positions outside Islam or Muslims who need guidance to find the right path, then emigrating would be recommended (*mustaḥabb*), and it might even reach the level of obligation (*wājib*) if the emigrant is one whom those living in that country need to strengthen their religion, adherence and morals, or need for the call to Allāh the Most High in these areas.

The Qur'ānic Categorisation of Emigration

Q1 – Let's proceed first from the Holy Qur'ān: there are three kinds of emigrants. If we examine the Qur'ānic verses talking about emigration, we find some verses talking about emigrating to Allāh, other verses talking about emigrating to Allāh and His Messenger, and verses talking about emigration in general. Allow me to put forward the following verses: **'And those who emigrate in the cause of Allāh after they have been oppressed, certainly We will give them good recompense in this world; and certainly the reward in the hereafter is greater, if they but knew it.'** 16:41; and another verse, **'And verily the Lord, unto those who emigrate after they are persecuted, and who then struggle hard (fight) for Allāh's cause and exercise patience, verily thy Lord, after that, is Forgiving and Most Merciful.'** 16:110; and a third, **'And he that leaves his dwelling and emigrates in the way of Allāh and His Messenger and is then overtaken by death, shall (certainly) be rewarded by Allāh; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.'** 4:100. When, I wonder, would the emigration be to Allāh and His Messenger?

A – We have to study the concept of emigration to Allāh in its absoluteness, then to try to study how the verses move dynamically in real life. As for the concept of emigration to Allāh, it involves a person leaving the situation which, whether through the people involved or through the surrounding circumstances, is expected to diminish that person in his strength, cause and dignity, to the benefit of the arrogant, infidels or oppressors so that he abnegates his humanistic entity as a result.

Here, emigration represents a rebellion against that reality by way of its rejection in the internal (self) movement of that person and, so, he abandons the reality that exerts pressure on his mind, heart and life

for a reality where Allāh is present in thinking, belief, feeling, religious adherence, freedom, strength and dignity. Therefore, a man can be an emigrant to Allāh and His Messenger even when he is inside a prison cell, or when he rejects what it is being forced upon him; and he can be an emigrant to Allāh and His Messenger without people putting pressure on him, but when very difficult circumstances challenge his needs and, so, put pressure on him.

Also, emigration to Allāh and His Messenger can be a question of leaving the materialistic reality that puts pressure on the person for another reality where he has the opportunity of enjoying freedom in his cultural, emotional and political activities or in the pursuit of his religious adherence. Thus, emigration to Allāh the Most High is a psychological state before being a dynamic, materialistic state; it is a movement inside the mind, which rejects what is being forced upon it; it is a movement inside the heart, which rejects any negative emotion that is being forced upon it; also, it is the reality which rejects the situations, deeds or relationships which are being forced upon it.

Regarding the first two gracious verses, they refer to the Islamic emigration which the Muslims underwent at the start of the Message, when Muslims were being forced to leave their religion through the campaigns of the polytheist Quraysh, who applied various means of pressure and terror to challenge the Muslims in their livelihoods and all their affairs in order to get them to return to polytheism.

Islam gave (much) importance to the question of *fitnah* in religion (being forced to leave your religion out of fear of or because of persecution) to the extent that it justified fighting the polytheist until the Islamic victory reached the state in which the polytheists were no longer able to persecute the Muslims (i.e. could not introduce *fitnah* into the situation) or able to introduce any pressure element: **'Fight**

against them until they can no longer persecute you, and Allāh's religion reigns supreme' 2:193. This verse was revealed to praise the Muslims who emigrated after they had been subjected to injustice through various kinds of boycott, torture etc and the (other) ways of *fitnah*.

And while the two verses are talking about an historic issue in the Islamic Message, we can (nonetheless) derive from them strength and dignity and so on for every emigration move undertaken by Muslims, at any time and to any place, from a pressurising reality that is threatening their religious adherence or their adherence to their freedom, as is happening in these times, when Islamic emigrants leave the land of the Muslims due to their inability to enjoy Islamic freedom, whether in the intellectual, political or social fields, in the land of the Muslims but are able to find it in the lands of the infidels. Therefore, this verse can be true in all the cases where people have emigrated, and escaped with their religion (intact) or their freedom, dignity or strength, for they have emigrated after being subjected to injustice or to *fitnah*.

The last verse belongs to the same context, and gives a more general idea, since its starts: 'The angels will ask those whom they carry off while steeped in sin: ''What were you doing?'' We were oppressed in the land, they will reply; they will say: ''Was not the earth of **Allāh** spacious enough for you to emigrate?'' Hell shall be their home; a bad fate. **Except those who are (really) weak and oppressed – men, women and children, who have no means in their power, nor (a guide) to direct their way. For these, there is hope that Allāh will pardon them: for Allāh is Pardoning and Forgiving. And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance; and he that leaves his dwelling and emigrates in**

the way of Allāh and His Messenger and is then overtaken by death, shall (certainly) be rewarded by Allāh; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.' 4:97-100. These verses refer to the state of being 'oppressed' or 'deemed weak' in which some people live, but when they are themselves responsible – oppressing themselves through the oppression of others when they follow the arrogant infidel in their thinking and values and in situations that are far removed from the path of Allāh the Most High. We find the Qur'ān emphasises that oppression is not an excuse for the oppressed who are able to run away from it and to emigrate to other countries where they can have their freedom of movement and the freedom to practise their ideas and religious adherence at full strength. And, perhaps, this implies that they may acquire strength in their emigration, so that they can return to their original positions to confront the arrogant from a position of power. The former have no excuse before Allāh, and thus he said: **'Hell shall be their home – a bad fate.'** The exception is the oppressed who have no freedom of movement or any means by which they can alleviate the pressure of the arrogant; Allāh says that some oppressed men, women and children have no way of alleviating the pressures of others, and thus He says **'there is hope that Allāh will pardon them'**, implying that the matter is not absolutely decided, but rather they should study the situation to see if there is any loophole – which they may not discover in normal times – which they can exploit to run away. Then, Allāh the Most High gives the fundamental rule: **'And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance.'**

So, here Allāh the Most High talks about emigration opportunities as opportunities of freedom and dynamic movement, and suggests that emigration from a restricted horizon and reality is not simply a

question of getting out of it, but also represents new, wider opportunities in which a man can practise a range of propagation methods and dynamic movement when he gains his freedom, as happened in the emigration of Muslims from Mecca to Medina where they could establish the first Islamic base from which they (later) beat the polytheists – hence they found 'great abundance'.

This verse talks about the new opportunities which emigration provides for those people who lost such opportunities in their original homelands, then it talks about the strong possibility that these emigrants, who have emigrated in the way of Allāh for the sake of Islam, will win the freedom that Allāh wants for the believers, the strength that He wants for them, and if they should die on the way or in the places of emigration then their reward shall be given by Allāh. So, they are in line for a reward that is unlimited by the normal evaluations, but it comes from Allāh's grace, and this is what is implied by the **'shall (certainly) be rewarded by Allāh'**.

To summarize, Islam does not regard the place where a person is born and brought up as a justification for him to accept suffocation simply because it is his homeland or that of his fathers and forefathers or the playgrounds of his childhood, because his humanity, as manifested in what he believes in, the feeling that he moves with, his strength and his freedom have more value than the land; for the value of the land comes from the degree to which it respects his humanity, and there should be no big role for emotional attachment to the land if he is to reject a diminution of his humanity for the sake of staying in that land. This is what the Commander of the Faithful (Imam 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib) (as) affirmed in his short words in Nahjul Balāghah: **'No country is more entitled to you than another: the best country is the one that supports you.'**

Emigration in the past and the present: a comparative view

Q2 – There is a fundamental difference between the early emigrations, especially the first one, which was an emigration to the land of belief, and present emigration to the land of infidelity. Allow me to recite this text from the History (*sīrah*) of Ibn Hishām: Ibn Isḥāq said, 'When the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) saw the hardship (*balā'*) to which his companions were subjected and the security he enjoyed, owing to his position with Allāh and with his uncle Abu Ṭālib, and that he was unable to prevent what was befalling them, he said to them: **"You should go to the land of Abyssinia (Ḥabashah), for it has a king in whose hands no one suffers injustice, and it is a land of truth, until Allāh gives you a relief from this."** So, (some of) the Muslims amongst the companions of the Prophet (sawa) left for Abyssinia for fear of being forced to abandon Islam out of fear of, or because of, persecution (*fitnah*) and so they ran away to Allāh with their religion (intact); this was the first emigration in Islam.' What can we understand from this text when making comparisons between the two emigrations, past and present?

A – I read in this text that the reality in which the Muslims were living was that of cruel pressure, to the extent that it was possible that they might have collapsed under the effect of all the psychological and physical factors to which they were subjected by the forces of polytheism. Therefore, if was a question of means they should seek to rescue them from their points of weakness; their points of weakness were dictating their options, so that they faced an intense dilemma, which made the Prophet (sawa) fear their collapse and the loss of their ability to (continue) to withstand. The Prophet (sawa) chose Abyssinia for them, since it was ruled by a just king who might open up to the Muslims, for he believed in the religion of the Messiah (Jesus), regardless of whether he was adhering to its rules

etc. His rule represented justice, and so if they sought refuge with him they would find a safe place to live; and even if the polytheists followed them to Abyssinia and asked the king to persecute them, in accordance with the alliances between the Quraysh and the king of Abyssinia, they would not be successful. This is what (actually) happened, for the books of history narrate that the polytheists sent 'Amr bin al-'Āṣ and another person and tried to talk to the Muslims in a way that would agitate the king of Abyssinia. However, he handled the matter with objectivity and prevented them from causing any harm to the Muslims.

I believe that this is what we should understand from the fight of many Islamists and Muslim activists, whether from the countries that are controlled by infidelity but which wear the mask of Islam, or from the lands of infidelity where Muslims were subjected to the infidel pressure, as we saw in Bosnia Herzegovina and others.

From all this, we have to understand a specific idea and this is that the emigration question occurs when Muslims have no power to continue or confront, but if they have power then they have to continue. This is why a group of Muslims stayed with the Prophet (sawa) in Mecca, stood fast and withstood all the negative consequences in their lives and situations that resulted from the strong opposition of the polytheists. The other group, those that emigrated, could not stand fast under the circumstances. There are those who are capable of using confrontation to weaken the arrogant or the oppressors, and in this case they have to stay, because the issue is not an absolute ruling that one has to emigrate when one is subjected to pressure, but rather it is this: if someone is choosing between staying in his country and emigrating, taking the negative and positive results into consideration, he might see that the positive results of emigration are greater than the positive results of staying,

and that the negative results of staying are greater than the negative results of emigration. Therefore, we should not see emigration as an objective issue which the believer can resort to simply because his country is putting pressure on him, but rather to emigrate he must be in a position where all the circumstances in his country have become so hard for him that he has not a single justification for staying in his country.

The characteristics of the land of emigration

Q3 – In another text, Ummu Salamah said: 'When we landed in Abyssinia, our neighbour (an-Najāshiyy, the king of the country) was the best of neighbours – our religion was safe, and we worshipped Allāh the Most High without being harmed or hearing anything that we did not like; when the Quraysh heard this, they conspired to send two men to an-Najāshiyy (to talk to him) about us.'

A – The characteristics of the land of emigration differ according to the circumstances that call for emigration. The circumstances that call for emigration could be pressure on freedoms, under which the person cannot continue to adhere to his religion and he is persecuted because of his religious adherence, as is happening in some Muslim countries, the secret services of which monitor the religious adherence of the believers, even if they have absolutely no links with any political opposition group, or when pressure is exerted on the dynamic Islam of Islamists, to the extent that they are prohibited from practising it and are forced to deviate from it by following other infidel or unjust trends.

In such a situation, we suggest that the land of emigration in the first case should be an arena where the believers can practise their religious freedoms without any religious pressures on them. Naturally, in this regard, we have to check that there are no

pressurizing circumstances that can draw people away from their religion through temptation, when there is no pressure from terror for instance. This is because, if we were to run away from our country to another country with (to protect) our religion, then we have to ensure that our religion is not corrupted (there). This may entail the necessity of finding new circumstances and means to develop the religious position in ourselves and in our children, so that religious adherence does not wither in a non-religious environment, after having survived against the effects of oppressive terrorism.

This might explain the (Islamic) prohibition of emigration to countries where religion would weaken, as this is *at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah* – the move from the land of Islam to the land of atheism. In the second case, an Islamist group must have freedom of movement in the land of emigration, whether in the call to Islam or in confronting the oppressor (in their country). This may be available in two circumstances: the first when they emigrate to a country that opposes the oppressor, so that the Islamist emigrants are given freedom of movement on the basis that they are looked upon as a group that conforms with their policy. The other circumstance occurs when the land of emigration is a land of freedom, as we see in the West, where countries give people their cultural and political freedom on conditions that relate to their internal security. In other words, this means that the land of emigration should conform to the goals of the emigrants. (However), they should examine this situation closely and from all aspects, since the believers who emigrate to protect their religion and (religious) adherence must, themselves, take care under all objective circumstances to keep with their religion and to develop it. Also, they should not make themselves vulnerable to another oppressor, who might make them deviate from the (right)

path in a way that is unacceptable to the founding principles of their movement, and they should not become a group that is merely following the objectives of another group.

Preserving the principles

Q4 – In Nahjul Balāghah, when the Commander of the Faithful, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusaīn (as) went to say farewell to Abu Tharr as he left for ar-Rabatha, to which he was emigrating under duress, the Imam advised him to preserve what he emigrated for. What lessons should we draw from this advice for emigrants in our present times?

A – The Imam (as) implied in what he said – **'They were afraid of you for their life, and you were afraid of them for your religion'** – that Abu Tharr was the kind of person who felt that his message was a message of criticism relating to reality of the Islamic rule, as it was being practised then, and intended to make the Islamic reality more balanced as far as justice and harmony with the Islamic Message were concerned. The others, on the other hand, were afraid for their lives on the basis that agitating public opinion against them could result in a revolt against them and the loss of the privileges that they had acquired from their position.

This was what, perhaps, happened in the end when the revolt started against 'Uthmān. Therefore, the Imam (as) wanted to say to Abu Tharr that when you were driven out of the town of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa), it was whilst you were on the path of struggle and the path of fear for your religion, because they wanted to put pressure on you to keep quiet or to submit to their temptations and to be with them, approving their falsehood.

In light of this, we understand from these words, for all the believers all around the world who have lived under pressure and have been driven out of their countries – either directly as some countries do

when they push their citizens beyond their borders, or indirectly through pressures by the ruler that preclude anyone who values free speech or free opinion or Islamic adherence from staying in the country – that he (the Imam) wants to say to all of them that they have become afraid for their lives because their rulers want to preserve the unjust, oppressive, infidel basis of their rule so that they can keep their privileges. But you have become afraid for your religion as well and, therefore, you must emigrate, and your emigration should not be seen as a tragedy for you since it represents a strong, fighting stance to preserve your religion and your principles.

The concept of *at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah*

Q5 – The concept of *at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah* needs greater clarification and detail; is it emigration to any country where belief may be weakened? And what are the characteristics of this weakening?

A – When we study the term *atta'arrub*, which is taken from the word *a'rābiyy*, which in turn refers to the reality in which the Arabs at that time were living – the reality of intellectual illiteracy and a backwardness of spirit and mind that manifested itself in the worship of idols and submission to a lot of base values, and on more than one level, or (in other words) the lack of the basis of intellectual development activity in which man could acquire a wide sense of culture that would make him an adherent of the truth and Islam and the line of belief – we see *at-ta'arrub* or *al-a'rābiyyah* represented by the position of the Bedouin, who had no opportunity for education or religious adherence, whilst Medina represented the position of the emigrants, which enabled the person to acquire belief, knowledge and all that which would improve his abilities in terms of culture and religion.

In light of this, *at-ta'arrub* after emigration means that the person was living in an Islamic circle within an Islamic area, for the emigration area, Medina, was the symbol of the area in which he could acquire cultural and religious education. Thus, any new emigration area to which he moves is an area which lacks the opportunities for religious education or more religious culture, which will make him – in this new position – automatically weaker through the lack of cultural opportunities that he could use to strengthen his belief. There will also be a lack of educational environment that can strengthen his adherence, and this will render his religious adherence – from the cultural and practical aspect – vulnerable to weakness over time, and could lead to its complete disappearance.

And in light of this, we can describe the positions of *at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah* as those positions in which one does not have Islamic arena for culture or education or an Islamic atmosphere in which one can live and 'breathe Islamically'.

Q6 – In this regard, we read the *hadīth* of Imam ar-Riḍā (as), in the narration of Muḥammad bin Sinān, as part of what the Imam (as) replied to his queries: **'And Allāh prohibited *'at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah'* (for fear of) abandoning the religion and abandoning support for the Prophets and the Imams, and what this would entail in terms of corruption and the abolition of the rights of everyone due to the limited (knowledge and adherence) of the dweller in the Bedouin areas. Therefore, if a man has come to know all the religion, it is not permitted for him to live among people of ignorance because it is not guaranteed that he would not depart from knowledge and join the people of ignorance (in their situation) and (even) go too far in this.'** The reader of this narration will see that it refers to the emigration to the land of

infidelity where infidel morals, norms and social, cultural and belief deviations are widespread. How does your Eminence read this text?

A – We take two points from this text. The first, and this is important, is the need for Islamic forces to confront the infidel challenges which attack the Muslims' arena. This arena needs all the Islamic powers: cultural, political, social, scientific and military. When infidel and oppressive forces put pressure on the land of the Muslims from all sides, these Islamic powers must be mobilized to confront them and to achieve victory over infidelity. This makes the emigration of capabilities *hijrat al-admighah* (minds) - the so-called 'brain drain' – a weakening of the scientific element in the Islamic position, and the emigration of powers a weakening of Islamic power in Islamic areas – likewise in the military and other fields.

Therefore, emigration from the land of the Muslims to the land of non-Muslims may be prohibited *(harām)*, if this will weaken Islamic power. In this regard, we remember the saying of Imam 'Alī (as), speaking about those who took a neutral stance between him and his enemies, when he described some of them: **'Verily, they let down the truth and (but) have not supported the falsehood!'** The question is not only that you should not support falsehood, but that you should not let down the truth, since when you let down the truth and neutralise your power in the arena of conflict, you have, through this stance, weakened the truth by distancing your power from its powers which might be needed to triumph over falsehood, and you have given falsehood negative support through the weakening of the powers of truth in the confrontation.

Therefore, the powers within Islam must not think of leaving the Islamic countries for the infidel countries, in the hope of finding better employment, or greater comfort, or because there one can

reduce the burden of confrontation, when the Islamic position is in dire need of every special power to strengthen its position.
The second point is the weakness of the cultural aspect in belief, and in the aspect of religious adherence in deeds. The move to the land of the Bedouin, which is a symbol of every land that has no Islamic culture, is not limited to the Islamic question (i.e. that the land being Muslim or not), but it widens to include all infidel lands where there is no opportunity to acquire more Islamic culture or education (or to live in a better) Islamic environment, which would lead to a regressive situation.

Q7 – Regarding the fear for one's self and family in emigrating to the countries where one might fear the weakening of one's own or one's family's religion: is this issue left to the emigrant's appraisal – something which may be abused, for every person would say 'I am sure of my own adherence' before going to that country and without having any practical experience of seeing whether his religion would weaken or not?
A – When we study this matter, we see that it involves two 'circles'. The first 'circle' comes from the fact that there must be an Islamic leadership – whether an individual or a group – to study the nature of the new circumstances in comparison with the old reality. This was the case in the Messenger's stance when he studied the matter (and compared) between the circumstances under which the Muslims in Mecca were living and the opportunities that they might acquire in Abyssinia.
In light of this, it is a duty of the Islamic leaderships, whether at the level of the Grand Islamic Jurists (*marji'iyyah*) or at the level of Islamic movements, to study these matters very closely and to guide Muslims in this regard. It is part of their duty, perhaps, if

circumstances favour it, to suggest places of emigration in a way that shows that one place will be better than another, but in such a way that it (the leadership) gives the general idea but leaves the choice for emigrants – this is if it does not have the ability of putting pressure on him over which choice to make.

The second 'circle' is the circle of one's own choice, in the context of one's own affairs – as we see in the individualism that the Muslims then practised. When the Islamic leaderships are weak, or where there are no Islamic movements that are responsible and full of awareness, (the role of) the religious conscience comes into play, for Allāh the Most High says: **'Nay, man has insight on his soul. Even though he were to put up his excuses.'** 75:14,15. Naturally, the person who wants to fulfil his responsibilities towards his Lord, and to prepare himself for submitting (his) account to Allāh the Most High, must not rush into judging his intellectual, spiritual or practical resistance in his new place of residence, but he will have to study the matter on the one hand through the experiences of those who have preceded him, and (on the other) through a close, objective study of the strength of his (religious) adherence and the level of temptations in the new place, or the strength of the pressures that might weaken his religion.

This matter will continue to be like other matters of conscience, or God-fearing, where the person moves through personal adherence. Naturally, he should seek the advice of those with experience to give him an idea, so that he can prepare his account to Allāh the Most High, and so there is no proof (of his bad conduct) in any place.

Q8 – In the ruling (*fatwah*) which Mr. Ḥasan Shubbar presented to you in his book *Al-Hijrah wal Lujū'* (*Emigration and Asylum*), there is an exception: 'If the person was confident, and sure about the

strength of his belief, and his ability to protect his family from deviation and religious decadence, then he is allowed to emigrate to the land of infidelity and deviation'. Doesn't this exception also need some explanation?

A – The ruling means that the emigrating person may be one of the callers to Allāh who has lived the personal experience of adherence and has stood fast against pressures and temptations, or that he is one of those who have a strong personality at a level where they move dynamically to guide people to Islam, as was the case with the Muslim scholars and merchants who used to emigrate to the lands of infidelity and (then) fill it with Islam. People such as these may indeed be obliged to emigrate because they will widen the Islamic arena through their move (to the land of emigration) by calling people to Allāh, or by presenting a bright image of Islam, or by entering arenas of confrontation, which would give to others a correct idea about Islam and Muslims. Such examples of individuals, or examples who are capable of moving dynamically as a group, also include those who might establish an Islamic centre, an Islamic movement or the like in their place of emigration. In the above-mentioned ruling, I was referring to such examples as the exception.

Q9 – In the rest of the answer to the above-mentioned query, you said: 'However, it is better to avoid that (*ijtināb*), owing to the spiritual weakness that it can lead to, unless one's presence is essential, and (in that case) it becomes recommended (*mustaḥabb*). Could you explain the divergence between avoiding and being recommended?

A – The spirituality question is one of the fundamental issues that a person might not experience actively outside the Islamic environment that gives him spirituality in his thinking and dynamic

movement, and in his relation with Allāh. That said, a person can create that environment for himself, or can create with his brother (that) spiritual environment, as in the meetings in Islamic centres where the believers come together to recite supplications and discuss matters relating to Allāh the Most High and their affairs – something which can provide a person with spirituality there more effectively perhaps than here. This is because when a person lives away from the environment, he feels as if someone wants to steal his spirituality and religion, and so he mobilizes all his powers for that purpose; yet he may leave the spiritual environment even when he is inside the places of the spirit – so to speak – because it is seen as a normal thing and taken for granted.

We remember in this regard a dialogue between one scholar, who emigrated to Iṣfahān from An-Najaf, with one who stayed in An-Najaf, when he sent him lines of poetry in which he expressed his longing for An-Najaf:

Pour on us rosewater
For we are thirsty and you are roses (*wurūdu*)
(Or, For we are thirsty and you are at the water (*wurūdu*))

And the other answered him:

Say to a friend who is looking from far away
At the houses of the lover, (but) like eyewitnesses
We, although nearby, complain from thirst
And you, although far away, won with all the drinking.

So, one man can live away from the spiritual environment at a high level of spirituality, while another who is close to such an environment may live away from it, since he regards it as a normal thing that he has become used to and is blasé about.

The effect of environment on upbringing

Q10 – When we consider the story of Joseph (as) when he lived in the palace of al-'Azīz (the prime minister), we find that the atmosphere of that palace did not affect him; also, we see that Asyah bint Muzāḥim – who lived in the palace of the Pharaoh as it sank beneath the weight of comfort and luxuries – was not distracted from her deep belief in Allāh the Most High. Could we draw a lesson from these two examples to say that one can live inside an atmosphere of belief and not be affected by it, and one can also live in a deviant atmosphere and not be affected by it?

A – Naturally, the environment plays a big role in positive development in favourable locations, and in negative development in unfavourable locations, because the environment represents the atmosphere that surrounds a person from all sides, so that he breathes it unto his thinking. That is because the value of the environment is that it takes over all of yourself – it behaves like the atmosphere, as in the case of an atmosphere filled with nice perfumes and an atmosphere filled with bad odours. That is why, we find that the environment plays its part in the world of plants, and we see in a desert plant elements which do not help it grow on mountains; likewise we find that a summer plant does not grow in winter, and this is why plant nurseries provide a winter climate for winter plants, and a summer climate for summer plants.

We do not deny that the environment plays a big role in this regard, and this is why the *ḥadīth* advised (people) to befriend the one who reminds you of Allāh and increases your knowledge etc. Distancing yourself from a bad friend is specifically recommended because of the effect of his environment, whether at an individual or group level. This is what the poet meant:

Befriend one of confidence and you shall win with his friendship
For Nature takes from every friend

And the wind takes from everything it passes by
Foul smells from the foul-smelling and sweet scent from the sweet-scented.

That said, the environment does not paralyse a person, but rather it prepares the climate and, thus, can encourage capability; to say that it creates an inescapable situation around a person is simply not true, for we see people who possess sufficient elements of goodness that they are able to rebel against the environment in a way that this resistance itself attains a level of goodness in which there is absolutely no place for badness, or it creates for itself an environment within it – and hermetically sealed from – the outer environment.

When belief grows inside someone's soul in such a way that he is not affected by what is around him, then he is living in an inner environment that does not get affected by the outer environment. The matter can also be true in a negative sense, so that a person may live, according to his past, upbringing or complexes, in a way that renders him immune to good environment. This is what explains the exceptions on this or that side of the equation. Therefore, the environment is a fundamental and essential issue, because it can make a person grow naturally towards the good side.

And perhaps when we study the educational approach to the issue of struggling with the soul (*jihād an-nafs*), we see that a person may be required to rebel against his inside environment since **'Nor do I absolve my own self from blame: the (human) soul is certainly prone to evil, except his to whom my Lord has bestowed mercy; my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful.'** 12:53; or against his outer environment, as we find in the story of Joseph (as), who was brought up in a spiritual atmosphere that later gave him great powers of resistance when he lived in the environment of temptation that he

rebelled against. However, he had a natural instinctive fear for himself, which is explained in the verse: **'He said: "O my Lord! The prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me: unless you turn away their snare from me, I shall (in my youthful folly) feel inclined towards them and join the ranks of the ignorant.'** 12:33. This verse refers to the natural state of man, regardless of the state of infallibility ascribed to the prophets. (In spite of) the intense pressure on him (Joseph (as)), and surrounded as he was by an environment of temptation and seduction, without any outside element (of support), he could be protected from it; thus he thought of escaping from that environment, either by leaving it or by freezing their (the women's) efforts to seduce him.

Chapter 2

Emigration: Establishing a Foundation in Jurisprudence

The jurisprudence of minorities

Changing nationality and related issues

Residence

Allegiance to the non-Muslim ruler

Submitting to the laws of non-Islamic governments

Relying on a non-Islamic judiciary

Working in a non-Muslim government

The relationship with non-Muslims

Code of conduct in dealing with Western institutions

Crime

Relations with Christian institutions

Joining political parties

Volunteering information

Giving concessions

Leniency over doing what is prohibited

Moving around the obscurities

Opening up to non-Muslims

Islamic societies

Islamic 'incubators'

The Westerners' monitoring of the behaviour of Muslims

Divorce in Western courts

Emigration: Establishing a Foundation in Jurisprudence

(The material in this chapter is a transcript of a dialogue between Mr. Ja'far 'Abdul Razzāq and his Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusain Faḍlullāh, held in Damascus, in August 1998.)

The jurisprudence of minorities

Q1 – Emigration jurisprudence is one of the big issues of our time, especially given the (continual) increase in the numbers of Muslim emigrants to north-western Europe; Muslim minorities totalling more than ten million are now living in Western Europe. It has been noticed that Shi'ite jurisprudence relating to the question of Islamic minorities is still in its infancy, while we find a big historical Sunni tradition in this respect. What are your Eminence's views on the basis of Shi'ite jurisprudence regarding living under non-Muslim rule?

A – One of the peculiarities of Islam is that it requires a Muslim to live his Islam whatever his position, whether it is Islamic – which is to say in an Islamic society or under an Islamic government – or in a non-Islamic society or under a non-Islamic government. Islam does not make adherence to its laws obligatory on its followers only under its state, as is the case with some Marxist intellectual and political doctrines that do not make the practice of Marxism obligatory on the Marxist (living) in a capitalist society; rather, he can be a capitalist in a capitalist society, on the basis that Marxist theory has to be applied comprehensively and cannot be practised by individuals here and there. By contrast, we find that Islam proceeds from the individual as a worshipper of Allāh and His successor on earth, and this goes on to form his mind, heart and life in himself and in his relationships with others.

In light of this, the Muslim has to adhere to the Islamic teachings and rulings, even in infidel societies, and to implement the Islamic rulings on himself and on his family, except where Islamic exceptions apply, such as in cases of compulsion (*iḍṭirar*), harm or intense difficulty; for Islam releases (the Muslim) from any Islamic ruling which the Muslim is forced to break, or which might cause harm or intense difficulty, (but) these would have to be exceptional cases.

Islam requires for the Muslim to respect his contracts with others and his commitments to them. So, if he moved to a certain non-Muslim country and entered into a contract with it – be it an implicit contract, or an explicit one according to the visa or residency rules or the asylum law – he should respect his contract and commitments in a way which would not contravene any particular Islamic ruling; for Islam does not allow anyone to agree to a contract or a condition that is prohibited since the *ḥadīth* says: **'The believers have to abide by the conditions they have agreed on, except a condition that made a prohibition (*ḥarām*) allowable *(ḥalāl*) and something allowed (*ḥalāl*) prohibited (*ḥarām*).'**

In light of this, the Muslim must live up to his promises and contracts. We have seen (ruled) – and this might differ from some of the opinion (rulings) of jurisprudence scholars – that the property of every human being should be respected, whether this human being is a Muslim or not, as long as he is in a state of peace with the Muslims, meaning that he does not wrong them, or attempt to undermine their religious adherence (*fitnah*), or drive them out of their country etc, or help to drive them out of their country. We see (rule) that the property of the non-Muslim, his honour and his person should be respected, and we do not see (rule) that infidelity, in itself, should nullify this duty to respect the property etc of the infidel, unless he has declared war on Muslims and taken up arms against them.

On this basis, we see (rule) that Islam prohibits the Muslim from doing wrong to the financial or civil system, even if it belongs to the infidels. These are, perhaps, the general guidelines of the primary ruling (*al-ḥukm al-awwalliyy*).

As for the secondary ruling (*al-ḥukm ath-thānewiyy*), the Muslim must distance himself from the allowable things that are allowed in the primary ruling if they should end up giving a bad image of Islam from the moral or civilised points of view, except if this negative view comes from the Muslim practising his Islam. (Here,) we are talking about the allowed things which the Muslim may practise in his own country without causing offence, but when he practises them in another society that has a different outlook to life, then the secondary ruling will oblige him to distance himself from anything that may harm the Muslims' image in a way which might bring him dishonour.

We have noticed that some Grand Islamic Jurists (*marāji'*) ruled that some 'Āshūra' traditions, which they thought were allowable in themselves, were forbidden (*ḥarām*) in the West or other places, if they would lead to the dishonour of the Shi'ite school of thought or Islam.

This is an overall picture for the person who lives in an infidel society.

Q2 – Your Eminence: according to your saying (ruling), following more than one Grand Islamic Jurist simultaneously (*tab'ıḍ*) harms the strength of some rulings, such as the traditional ruling (*ḥukm mashhūr*) amongst the Shi'ites that the property of the infidel is allowable for (may be taken by) the Muslim, and you prohibit this. But some may follow the ruling of the other (Grand Islamic Jurists).

A – In these issues, owing to their importance, I do not allow people to follow more than one Grand Islamic Jurist (*tab'Id*).

Changing nationality and related issues

Q3 – Some Sunni jurists rule that it is allowable to acquire the Western nationality unless it leads to (falling into) what is forbidden (*ḥarām*). In general, changing nationality means for many simply getting legal documents such as a passport, residence permit and social security papers. However, some jurists regard this a rejection of Islam (*riddah*), since it may mean joining the Christian faith and a Christian culture. What is your opinion about this?

A – This is one of the issues of a changing nature to which you cannot give either a negative or positive Islamic legal ruling, because the issue of one acquiring the nationality of a non-Muslim country is not forbidden in itself, like when the Muslim is living in a non-Muslim country. And if we know that countries which call themselves Islamic have laws which are un-Islamic, as we find in the issues of polygamy, civil marriage etc, then the existence of such non-Islamic laws in that country does not change the fact that the Muslim must abide by the Islamic code. But acquiring the nationality of a given country by someone means that he is planting his roots in that country so that his offspring – in the future – will become citizens of that country, with all the negative and positive consequences that this citizenship holds.

Therefore, the man must study (the matter) whilst looking towards the future: might the nationality that he is acquiring lead to his children going astray and moving away from Islam in the future? Or, might it lead to positive results if, in this or that country, there were Islamic 'incubators' (institutes, schools etc) that could develop these children Islamically, so that we could nurture a country in which

there are people working actively? And we – as citizens speaking with (fellow) citizens of the country in which we dwell – can also use our presence there to call its citizens to Islam; or to serve our political causes through our presence, which can open up to our right to take a stance in this or that issue.

Q4 – Does your Eminence mean participating in political life?
A – I mean political, social, cultural, media-related and other kinds of participation. The matter in question has negative as well as positive aspects, and differs from one country to another, since in some countries we cannot except notable results, due to the obstacles there. In France (for example), there are around four million Muslims with French nationality, something which has led some observers to say that Islam is the second religion of France. However, they are not allowed political freedom, and Muslims cannot hold any political office. Therefore, we have to study the matter at both the individual level and the group level to give a ruling – positive or negative (for or against) – according to the differences in individuals and positions.

Q5 – Whoever acquires Western nationality must obey the particular laws of that country, such as serving in the army, residency and personal status law, whilst if he stays as a foreigner national residing in that country then he can follow the special international law, which is represented by his own country's laws regarding the above mentioned matters. For now, must those who are naturalized (acquire a foreign nationality) follow the laws of marriage, divorce, child custody, wife maintenance and inheritance as laid down by Western legislation?
A – It is forbidden for a Muslim to submit to any non-Islamic law voluntarily, especially if he is able to do avoid this from a practical

point of view. So if the state rules that men and women should receive the same amount (of inheritance) and he can resolve the matter somehow in its application since the woman in question is Muslim, then there is no problem. But if he cannot do this, his naturalisation may become a problem in this regard, unless there are Islamic interests that are more important.

Q6 – According to the Western law, any person may write a will, specifying the way in which he would like his estate to be distributed; he can arrange this distribution according to the Islamic code, and the Western state is legally obliged to execute the will of the deceased, whatever its instructions?

A – If he is able to solve the matter by any means, then he is obliged to do so. I believe that these issues must be studied, from a jurisprudence point of view, in all its aspects, and that the interests (advantages) (*maṣāliḥ*) and blights (disadvantages) (*mafāsid*) (harm caused or spoiling things) must be studied in each individual case, as well as in broader humanistic terms.

Residence

Q7 – Regarding residence in Western countries because of political problems or difficult economic circumstances in Islamic countries – do such reasons justify residing in an infidel land?

A – We have to study this matter in terms of the general framework, as well as at the individual level. As for the general framework, we do not object to large Islamic groups going to live in non-Muslim lands if they can taken up Islamic positions in these places, by establishing mosques and Islamic clubs and centres that take care of the Muslims' Islam and can guarantee proper Islamic development for their

children. With this in mind, we encourage this because it brings great benefits to the Muslims.

We find that the Jews have been able to control the whole of the Western society through their emigration and residence there, whilst retaining their Jewish identity as the fundamental element in their thinking and behaviour. We believe that when the emigration question benefits from Islamic planning, it can transform a big society into an Islamic one.

As for the matter at an individual level, this does not follow planning but relates to the individual's own circumstances. The principal standpoint (ruling) is that he should not travel to non-Muslim countries where his religion would be automatically weakened or where, because of the circumstances there, all his thoughts turn to the materialistic side of life and away from the religious or moral side. If he tries to reside in a country lacking any Islamic activity, in this case it is forbidden (*harām*) for him to travel and reside there, since this is bound to weaken his religion. The terms *a'rabiyy* or *at-ta'arrub ba'dal hijrah* apply in such cases, in which the Muslim drifts away from Islamic knowledge, and consequently from Islamic adherence. Allāh the Most High says: **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones, under the charge of fierce and mighty angels who never disobey Allāh's command and who promptly do His bidding'** 66:6; we understand from this that protecting one's self and one's family from going astray is a fundamental aspect of Islamic education and Islamic guidance.

Allegiance to the non-Muslim ruler

Q8 – In the 'jurisprudence of minorities' there are many (major) issues, one of which is allegiance to the non-Muslim ruler. What is the ruling of the Islamic law (*Sharī'ah*) in this matter?

A – Allegiance has two meanings: the first is (one's) adherence to the legality of the allegiance and opening up to it emotionally as a person who is opposing Allāh and His Messenger, in such a way that his opposition to Allāh and His Messenger is not seen (by him) as a negative element.

There is no doubt that this attitude is not Islamic, because we are not allowed to believe in the legal status of anyone who does not deserve that status, even if he is a Muslim; also, we must not hold love in our hearts for any person who opposes Allāh and His Messenger, but our emotions – in our relations with others – must proceed from their stance before Allāh and His Messenger, negative or positive. We can perhaps confirm this understanding from Allāh's words: **'You shall find no believers in Allāh and in the Last Day (Day of Judgement) who are on friendly terms with those who oppose Allāh and His Apostle even though they be their fathers, sons, brothers, or their nearest kindred'** 58:22; or: **'Allāh does not forbid you to be kind and just to those who have neither fought against you on account of your religion nor driven you from your homes; Allāh loves the just. But He forbids you to make friends with those who have fought against you on account of your religion and driven you from your homes or abetted others to drive you out; those who make friends with them are wrongdoers.'** 60:8,9.

Therefore, on this basis, the Muslim cannot be loyal to the infidel.

The second (meaning of allegiance) is that he co-exists with him (the non-Muslim ruler), and adheres to his rule as far as public order is

concerned. There is no problem in that, since the Muslim is not allowed to commit any contravention to the order in any society, especially if he has entered into a contract with the authorities supervising that order.

Q9 – Can we say that every non-Muslim ruler is an oppressive (*dhālim*) or unjust (*ghayr 'ādil*) ruler?

A – The word *dhulm* (inflicting injustice) has two aspects. There is practical oppression which confiscates the freedom, rights and properties of others. And there is the *dhulm* which concerns the plundering of legal rights. Islam says of oppressors that they have inflicted injustice on themselves by not believing, so it regards infidelity as a stance of *dhulm* against Allāh. (Also,) it regards every person who occupies a position that is not his legal position as an oppressor (*dhālim*). Thus, every non-Muslim (ruler) is an unjust ruler since he is unjust to the position he is in, because he does not represent the legal authority. However, he could be just in his conduct with the people; it was narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) said: **'I was born in the time of a just ruler'**, referring to (the Persian) Kisrā Anoshirwān, who was famed for his justice.

So, when you say *al-ḥākim al-jā'ir* (the unjust ruler), you mean – in jurisprudence terminology – the ruler who has unlawfully taken the (ruling) position, whether this was through his own endeavour or through the state, the law of which produced the ruler.

Q10 – But Western rulers nowadays are the product of elections in which their people participate to choose them.

A – When we talk about Islam as the religion which Allāh wants all humanity to abide by as a form of rule, it is natural that any form of rule – apart from the rule of Islam – is not a legal rule, even if the

ruler has been elected by the people. For example, in the Islamic circles and from the Shi'ite Imamate point of view, the *shūrā* (council) – disregarding the reservations about the caliphs or those who succeeded them – did not provide legality to their rule because the matter had gone beyond the whole of Islamic legality (lawful rulers).

So, we have to study the matter in terms of the foundation of this legality or the basis of the rule: is it based on the votes of the majority, whatever that majority is, or the majority with certain characteristics, or is it a rule based on certain characteristics regardless of the majority?

Submitting to the laws of non-Islamic governments

Q11 – Another (major) issue: submitting to the laws of non-Islamic governments. How should the Muslim refugee deal with these laws?

A – There are two types of laws: some laws are contradictory to a clear Islamic ruling, meaning that the person is supposed to follow laws in areas where Islam prohibits dealing with anything related to them, whilst others rank among the allowable (*mubāḥ*). If the laws are prohibited, then the Muslim is not allowed to implement then unless in so doing he would be subjected to unbearable harm, which would constitute a case of compulsion (*iḍṭirār*).

But if these laws are part of the allowable (*mubāḥ*) matters that are not forbidden by Islam, then we see (rule) that it is necessary for the Muslim to abide by them, according to the contract which he has entered into with the host country (in his visa or leave to stay or grant of asylum).

Q12 – Your ruling (*fatwā*) prohibiting evading and disobeying the law has a broad positive effect even on Westerners who think that we

have a certain understanding of the law that is the conventional or common one.

A – The Muslim must abide by the rules of public order in any society that he dwells in, first from the contract aspect, and second at the secondary (ruling) level (*al-'unwān ath-thānewiyy*), so as to give Islam the civilised image that would encourage people to embrace it.

Relying on a non-Islamic judiciary

Q13 – And what about relying on a non-Islamic judiciary in disputes?

A – The principal standpoint (ruling) is that the Muslim is not allowed to rely on any judge who does not rule according to Allāh's code. However, if getting his legal rights cannot be achieved unless he resorts to a non-Muslim judge, then a Muslim is allowed to do so; this is the reality in the West today, especially if the dispute is with a non-Muslim, and so we can implement the *ilzām* principle: **'Make them abide by what they have made obligatory on themselves.'** So if the judge rules not in accordance with what the Muslim abides by but in accordance with what the opponent abides by, then we can deal with him on this basis.

Working in a non-Muslim government

Q14 – Regarding work in the government of a non-Muslim ruler: do the Grand Islamic Jurists allow this?

A – We allow such work so long as it is related to the higher Islamic interests of the Muslims living there, or to the big Islamic issues. There is no problem with Muslims getting employment in departments of non-Islamic governments, whether in scientific, administrative, industrial, agricultural or other areas, as long as it does not harm the general Islamic situation in the relationship between

that state and Muslims, and provided that it does not disregard the individual Islamic rulings concerning forbidden practices.

Q15 – If the job is in the security services (the police), so that a Muslim might be stopping asylum seekers from entering the country – what is the ruling in this case?

A – This matter has to be studied in terms of its qualitative interest, since it is not allowable for a person to be employed in a job in which he feels that he is inflicting injustice, through his job, on others, even in the governments of Islamic societies. But if we assume that the Muslims are a big community (in a given country) and that their abstention from security and administrative jobs would harm the strength of their presence there, or that their participation would benefit them greatly, then there is no problem with that from the Islamic legal point of view. In fact, we have ruled for some people who hold Western nationalities that, if they find that the interests of Islam, regarding Islamic issues, lie in voting for one nominee in favour of another, as in a case where this nominee supports Islamic issues and stands against Zionism and the enemies of Islam, or perhaps can take better care of the Muslims than the other, we allow participation.

We may summarise this in terms of the existence of an Islamic interest for the Islamic community which resides there, or the big Islamic issues that are afflicted by electing this or that nominee or by gaining some control or say in that society to a level in which they can have a positive influence regarding the Muslims' interests in decision taking, as the Jews do in Europe, America and elsewhere.

We emphasise that Muslims should work to acquire advanced (important) positions if these lead to actively supporting Islamic

issues, or to protecting them from harm, or to strengthening the Muslims residing in that country.

Q16 – Is the matter the same regarding the army, which is under the orders of the Western state, and which may serve in the Peace Keeping Force (in Lebanon)?
A – The principal standpoint (ruling) is that it is forbidden to join an army that may oppress peoples (of the world) or inflict harm on Islam, unless there is an overriding Islamic interest.

Q17 – Is it necessary to obtain special permission?
A – (The person) must turn to the people who have experience in general Islamic interests.

The relationship with non-Muslims
Q18 – Regarding non-Muslims, do you find that what should be applied to them is the *ilzām* principle: **'Make them abide by what they have made obligatory on themselves'**?
A – 'Compulsion' means imposing the rulings that are not part of our religion, and so removing from them (non-Muslims) what they believe that we have a right to. The 'compulsion principle' does not proceed from legislation in every situation, but it represents your relationship with others who have another religion or school of thought. This is why the *ḥadīth* said: **'It is allowable for the people of every religion to follow what they abide by (as the religion between them and God).'**
For example, we consider the marriage of Christians or Jews or even secular people a legal marriage, even if it differs in detail from our fundamentals of marriage. But we find that it is not allowable for the Muslim to marry a married Christian, Jewish or secular woman, if she

adheres to Christianity, Judaism or secularism as a code of thinking and conduct.

Q19 – On issue of co-existing with non-Muslims, we see many host countries cooperate, perhaps even conspire, with the Zionist enemy. How should we deal with these countries?

A – We fight those who fight us and live in peace with those who live in peace with us – this is what we understand from the book of Allāh the Most High: **'Allāh does not forbid you to be kind and just to those who have neither fought against you on account of your religion nor driven you from your homes; Allāh loves the just.'** 60:8. This verse emphasises that we have to treat them well, show favour to them, be just to them by acknowledging their rights, and not impinge on their legal or human rights. We are not in the position of (waging) war. Perhaps, in the beginning of the Message, circumstances forced the spread of Islam in the world and obliged Muslims to embark boldly upon the task of calling people to Allāh, and if anyone stood against it, Islam defended its freedom. We do not agree with those who claim that Islam proceeded to force itself upon others as a religion. Yes, perhaps – at certain stages – it needed to enforce the authority of Islam, exactly as in the actual situation (today), where we see all states in the world striving to enforce their influence, either by acceptable or by unacceptable means. However, we find that in the contemporary reality, the question of violence is no longer valid in the light of the present circumstances of the call to Islam: peace has now become stronger than violence in bringing people to Islam and its dynamic movement in the world.

Therefore, we want to be friends with the world; this is what we can extract from His saying: **'A good deed and a bad deed are not equal; repel (the bad deed) with whatever (behaviour) is better,**

and treat him with whom you share enmity as if he is a dearest friend' 41:34. We understand from this that Islam guides Muslims to transform their enemies into friends – provided they do not deviate from the Islamic path.

This can also be seen when we read the saying of the Most High: **'Say; "O people of the Book, let us come to a common word (agreement) between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh, that we will associate none with Him and none of us shall set up mortals as deities besides Allāh"; if they refuse, say: "Bear witness that we have surrendered ourselves to Allāh"'** 3:64. The Qur'ān concentrates on the 'common word' or 'agreement' (*al-kalimah as-sawā'*); there is no peculiarity about the People of the Book here, but we can widen this to every group in the world with whom we agree on political, cultural or social positions.

We would like our relationships with the world to be defined by following the path of openness and cooperation, not by rejection and hatred. As for the question of love and allegiance, this is related to the relationship of that stance with the belief and to its value to the person.

An important aspect in Islamic education is the necessity to maintain a partition between you and others in questions of belief, so as to protect the health and purity of the belief in your self, but without letting this harm your co-existing relationship with others. It can be said that many in the world live in such an atmosphere – in fact, it is natural that you should feel a partition between you and any person with whom you differ, even in political and social matters.

Islam gives human relationships two dimensions. The first is the value dimension – the social, moral value as opposed to the psychological state. The second is the reality dimension in dealing with others.

We see when Allāh the Most High talks about polygamy, He says: **'Try as you may, you cannot treat all your wives impartially; but do not set yourself altogether against any of them, leaving her, as it were, in suspense; and if you do what is right and guard yourself against wrongdoing, you will find Allāh Forgiving and Merciful.'** 4:129. The speech is addressed to the husband and there is no problem about whatever state his heart is in, and if he has more love for one wife than the other; but he should not let his heart divert towards one of them to the extent that he withholds marital rights from the other, making her 'pendant' – neither married nor divorced.

We can, perhaps, conclude from this that we have to live with others through the general Islamic values which the Qur'ān expressed in His saying: **'And speak fair to the people'** 2:83, and Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq's saying: **'Be callers without (using) your tongues, so that they see from you truth, good (deeds) and God-fearing, for this is a caller.'** Also, we can conclude from this that your psychological state that proceeds from your indulgence in your belief and thoughts should not negatively affect your treatment of others – in the framework of the general humanistic values by which Islam requires you to live, within the moral code that rules your relationship with the others.

Code of conduct in dealing with Western institutions

Q20 – Some view the Western institutions as a kind of prey or source of booty from which they must profit to the maximum even if through dishonourable methods such as fraud, forgery and lying; some believe that it is allowable to steal the property of the infidels. How can we draw a positive image of the relationship between the Muslim emigrant with the institutions that offer him confidence,

respect and accept what he says, when, whenever the opposite is confirmed, this is seen to reflect badly on all Muslims and not just on the Muslim who violated the law?

A – Through our study of Islamic morals, we find that they do not suggest that truthfulness rests with the Muslim and lying with the non-Muslim, or that lying to the non-Muslim becomes allowable and telling the truth only to fellow Muslims is obligatory, for the matter lies not with others, but with the person himself.

This is also the case as far as trustworthiness is concerned. We have the *ḥadīth*: **'Give back the property that you were entrusted with (*al-amānah*) to whoever entrusted you with it even to the killer of the sons of the prophets!'** Imam 'Alī as-Sajjād Zaīn al-'Ābidīn (as) said: **'If the person who hit 'Alī with the sword entrusted me with the sword with which he had hit 'Alī, and I accepted that, I would surely return it to him!'** It was also narrated: **'(He has) no religion (religious adherence) who cannot be trusted (is not trustworthy), even if he fasts and prays.'**

Therefore, Islamic morals represent the Islamic values which proceed from the Muslim, whether these morals are related to his individual state or to his relationship with others, for Islam requires the Muslim to respect others except in the event of war because this has a certain moral consideration in all religions and civilisations. A man will remain as a fellow human being in terms of your relationship with him and your respect for him unless he impinges on your humanity: **'attack him as he attacks you; have fear of Allāh, and know that Allāh is with the God-fearing.'** 2:194.

Thus, we reject any immoral deed committed against peaceful non-Muslims, in accordance with His saying: **'Allāh does not forbid you to be kind and just to those who have neither fought against you on account of your religion nor driven you from your**

homes; Allāh loves the just.' 60:8. Justice demands that you grant the right that belongs to everyone – Muslim or non-Muslim, hence you cannot deny a non-Muslim his rights with regard to you, or deny him the rights that you enjoy; so you cannot steal his property, or disregard the covenant between you and him, or harm him in any way.

Regarding the issue of peaceful (co-existence), we understand from the Holy Qur'ān that you should treat within a peaceful framework everyone who treats you likewise, and we can present proof of this from more than one verse: **'And if they incline to peace, make peace with them, and put your trust in Allāh; it is surely He who is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.'** 8:61. As far as property is concerned, Allāh the Most High condemned (some of) the People of the Book of the Jews when He said: **'Among the People of the Book there are some who, if you trust them with a heap of gold, will return it to you intact; and there are others who, if you trust them with one dīnār, will not hand it back unless you demand it with importunity; for they say: "We are not bound to keep faith with the illiterate people (or Meccans)"'** 3:75; the Qur'ān condemned them in their notion that there was no responsibility or obligation on them as far as non-Jewish people are concerned. Therefore, if the Muslim applies such a notion for non-Muslims, then he becomes like the Jew and will be subject to the condemnation of Allāh the Most High, according to what we can conclude from this verse.

Therefore, we say to all Muslims that they must respect the property, blood and honour of people and all that is related to them, on the basis of their Islamic obligations, which prohibit them from not doing so through their responsibility to show Islam to others in (its) best light, (both) in practice and behaviour. We noticed how Imam

Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) advised his followers regarding non-Shi'ite Muslims, when he said: **'Visit their sick, follow their dead (to the cemetery) and pray in their congregation so that they say: O Allāh! Give mercy to Ja'far bin Muḥammad, for he has taught good morals to his followers; behave well to provide a good image of us, and do not behave badly and (so) damage our image!'**

That a person must be a good propaganda for the sacred entity (i.e. the Imam) to which he belongs is Islamically unquestionable, whether it be in the religious circle to which he belongs or regarding the followers of other religions, to the extent that we have found that those scholars who rule that the property of non-Muslims is not to be respected were not allowing their followers in the Western societies, to commit negative deeds as far as the property or honour of people were concerned, since that would lead to the dishonour of Muslims and Islam itself.

Those who study the rulings of some Grand Islamic Jurists or scholars, will know that they have made it forbidden at the secondary (ruling) level, since this would lead to dishonour from the qualitative point of view. And should some say: 'I steal and no one knows about it' or 'I defraud in insurance claims without the knowledge of others', we say to them that the matter is related to the qualitative aspect, i.e. that the deed – by its very nature – not the person, would lead to dishonour. Naturally, he would say that his deed would not lead to such consequences, but this is how the catastrophe occurs!

Crime

Q21 – It has been noticed that there is a high crime rate among Muslim emigrants. In Holland, for example, one third of prisoners of all nationalities are Muslims, whilst Muslims represent no more than

3.5% of the total population. The media exploits these errors and crimes committed by the Muslims, and blow them out (of proportion), to demean Islam's reputation. How can we reduce such negative conduct?

A – These people may be suffering from some moral, social or individual weaknesses that push them to this. Some of them commit crimes in accordance with some rulings that justify stealing or trespassing on the honour of others, or justify committing fraud in the contracts into which they enter with others, or using (abusing) laws that are lenient to people because of confidence in them, as is the case with matters related to loans, companies and the like, so that they find committing crimes easier and think that they cannot be brought to account. Some might proceed (down the criminal path) because they are non-religious; they might have been criminals in their own countries and find that the crime arena (opportunity) wider in their adopted country.

The matter needs a moral Islamic awareness campaign on the one hand, and a political and social awareness campaign on the other. This should be done by freeing the Muslims from the consequences that may lead to loss of the Social Security (payments) which they had obtained in this or that country, and loss of respect from the people around them, with the result that when they leave prison they will live in society under the shadow of the caution with which people will treat them, and they will become marginalized and restless figures in society.

We have to use all methods of improving awareness to free these people on the basis of their belief on the one hand, and their humanity interests on the other. Everyone must cooperate in this, whether in scholarly guidance or the social fields.

Relations with Christian institutions

Q22 – There are projects for rapprochement or open exchanges between the religions, and opportunities may arise to clarify Islamic issues and rulings or to counter negative, sceptical questions about the revelation and the Messenger (sawa). Should we agree from the outset on the people who might be involved and the issues to be discussed, for fear of getting lured (in error), or should we leave these matters open?

A – I imagine that the principle is to respond positively to their invitation, if the arena is one of dialogue, and intellectual and humanistic discussion which one can use to clarify or defend an idea or solve a problem or provide the understanding, or to find some kind of psychological rapprochement which may help, in the future, to attract others to Islam, even if only to make them live on peaceful terms with Islam if they do not reach the level of belief.

I find that Western people tend to have an objective mentality with which they weigh matters with thought and objectivity under normal circumstances, provided that there are no conditions that negatively affect the purity of their soul, such as political or local influences that create complexes in the person, especially in the light of the fierce campaign against Islam by the media.

I believe that we have to proceed with the dialogue, in the arenas of intellectual dialogue, with the Christians, Jews, Buddhists and atheists, and likewise to proceed in a missionary propagation campaign among the people with whom we live to attract them to Islam, intellectually, in terms of values, morally and in behaviour, and to encourage them to embrace Islam. This is because I believe that it is not difficult for someone who has a wide knowledge of Islam and keen awareness of the reality in which he lives to persuade others to embrace Islam, since Islam is more reason-based and more reality-

based than the other religions in terms of the proofs and concepts it presents.

So, the principal standpoint is that one should respond positively to every invitation to dialogue and every opportunity to call people to Allāh, but on the condition that one is be capable of carrying out the dialogue on a high cultural level. Otherwise, if someone lacks such capability, he might harm Islam through his ignorance, backwardness and misguided understanding of Islam in the negative points he makes.

Naturally, this applies only to favourable environments. The invitation to dialogue proceeds from a sly political game simply in order to create a dilemma for Muslims, as we see in the invitation to a Jewish-Islamic dialogue which conceals an effort to propagandise for the Zionist Entity (Israel), owing to the Jewish reality in Europe, which is the connection between this Entity and what it represents. Some invitations to dialogue between the three religions might call for suspicion, and therefore one has to investigate this. We have no objection to dialogue with the Jews as Jews from the religious angle, but we fear that behind such invitations lies a political agenda which wants Muslims to normalise their relations with the Israeli Jews or with the Zionist Entity itself.

Q23 – Sometimes, the invitation to dialogue comes from the distorted image of Islam in the minds of the Christians, and so a meeting with a Christian group might offer the chance to talk about the correct image.

A – We mean by the obligation to respond to the invitation to dialogue that this applies to all cases, whether with religious scholars or intellectuals, as this is one of the kinds of call to Islam in which

wisdom and kindly guidance, advice and reasoning can be displayed in the most courteous manner.

Q24 – What if the reverse is requested of us, i.e. the Christians, in exchange for giving us the chance to talk with Christians, ask us to give them the chance to talk with Muslims – what shall we do?
A – If objective circumstances call for this, and there were people in the Muslim group who could draw the attention to whatever might have a negative effect on the Muslims' beliefs, then there is no objection.

Q25 – Some Christian missionary movements, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, work (are active) amongst Muslim refugees, and we notice that some naive people easily fall prey to these movements, something which can sometimes be the consequence of simple curiosity.
A – It is noticeable that Catholics fight this organization with the same force as the Muslims, because a lot of suspicions surround the activities of those whose backgrounds proceed from Zionist ideas. Therefore, we caution Muslims from submitting to their influences, and believe that all of us must use all available means to stop them from entering our societies.

Q26 – Some believe that we can stand up to them.
A – Our information is that they sow confusion in general concepts so that a Muslim may (misguidedly) feel that he is talking with them about Islam.

Q27 – They may bring some booklets that talk about Islam and Christianity, and, as you said, some Christian countries caution (people) about them.
A – We believe that when a matter is surrounded by this level of suspicion, there must be a high level of caution.

Q28 – Do you rule that there shall be no dealings with them at all?
A – Yes, this is not allowable for it has (the potential of) driving Muslims astray and distancing them from understanding the pure Islamic line through conjuring with words and atmospheres.

Joining political parties
Q29 – In some of your speeches to refugees, you have said that Muslim political refugees are allowed to join Western political parties, but you have attached a condition that they should belong to an Islamic movement that can plan on their behalf. Is this condition obligatory, or a question of advice or preference?
A – It is an obligatory condition in general, for the simple reason that when a person is on his own and joins a non-Islamic party he may dissolve in that atmosphere and get overwhelmed by the current. From the Islamic fundamental legal angle, he is not allowed to join any non-Islamic party or group, especially if this party or group adheres to some political lines that may become negative lines against Islam if it (the party or group) falls under the influence of a certain international union which clashes with Muslims on some issues and in other respects.
But, if he has joined an Islamic movement that plans for him, takes care of him and supervises his existence and conduct, his presence in that group or party would be subject to the Islamic movement's planning, something which would make it (his party status) positive

for the Islamic interest, instead of being negative towards these parties.

Q30 – We know that political parties are, generally, the only route to parliament in Western countries, and there are Muslim members in some of these parliaments; we also know members of parliament influence decision making, especially decisions relating to Muslim issues and problems or to the Muslim World, such as aid etc. What planning should be done to put a number of Muslim representatives unto Western parliaments so as to form a 'lobby' or Islamic pressure group as other communities have?

A – We cannot talk about this in any detail, because the matter differs between one country and another and between one circumstance and another; even the Muslims who are selected to get into this party or that group may differ as well. Whatever the case, there must be persons who have experience in Islamic, international and local politics to plan how Muslims should enter in this or that party to form a partisan 'lobby' – within the organisational (party) framework – and to become an Islamic 'lobby' in the general political arena.

This matter requires a full study of the arena, in addition to a political study (which also takes care of the) dynamic movement aspect, in this regard. However, we emphasise the necessity of an Islamic 'lobby' in any Western place of emigration so that we can, through this, give support to Islamic issues and the Islamic presence in that country by virtue of this political influence on the reality (there).

Q31 – In the same regard, some refugees present suggestions and ideas to draw benefit from the large number of people in the emigrant or expatriate community so as to form a pressure group in

the country that they reside in, to protect themselves from the dangers surrounding them and also to change the stance towards the regime that was the cause of their emigration.

A – The large number can be a positive factor, but with two conditions: the first is that it should be believing, (Islamically) religious and (full of) awareness so that it lives the concerns of Islam in the line of God-fearing, to the extent that everyone of the people is responsible (as part of the community) and fulfils their obligations towards their children. The second condition is that there should be a guidance element, either direct or indirect; an indirect element should represent a certain position from which individuals can activate the lines of guidance and care in general.

But the problem which we experience now among most emigrant societies (communities) is the disputes that destroy the spirit of Islam and God-fearing within these people, with the result that large numbers become a problem for these communities because they combine all the sensitivities and narrow partisan problems in which this or that group moves with the 'siege' mentality of emigrants. This, in addition to the lack of direct guidance, is because wherever we find one guiding person there are usually others presenting a different mentality and whose efforts, and the efforts of all those related to him, are directed towards destroying the plans from which that (the first) open-minded and aware person proceeded.

Also, the complicated guidelines which arrive from outside the emigration areas, from the homeland and outside it – and I am not talking here about the Iraqis only but about all emigrant groups – complicate the relationships between them and impress upon Muslims that their Islamic obligation is to boycott someone, or that your organisation obliges you not to engage with other groups.

Therefore, I imagine that the large numbers have become a problem for all, to the extent that if we find an aware and open-minded group living as a small community within this mass (the large numbers), it might occupy itself (exclusively) with the problems imposed upon it by the other group, so that the matter becomes one of action and reaction. We have, then, to think about a way that makes this society live in a state of emergency regarding its belief responsibility – towards the present generation and future generations – so that they occupy themselves with establishing schools, Islamic centres etc. We have to deal with these issues there in a more decisive and intimate way than the way they are dealt with in the homeland.

When we study the reality of the social, political and religious fragmentations, so to speak, that are present in the arena, it (the large numbers) becomes something negative, something which we notice in most emigrant groups and in more than one country.

Q32 – Do we also need to formulate an aware Islamic political culture for the emigrant masses, so that they foster this idea and practise it?

A – The dynamic Islamic groups present abroad, whether partisan, scholarly or cultural, have to educate Muslims with a reality-based Islamic culture, for the problem with a lot of the Islamic cultural groups is that they talk about absolutes, and when they talk about values they do so in an abstract way, divorced from reality.

We have to implant in the awareness of Muslims the concept of *bāb at-tazāḥum bayna al-masālih wal mafāsid* (the competition between interests and blights) and that we have to work towards making Islam a force in any place in which it can gain that force, and we have to work to put Muslims in a position of force, be it at the locations they are already in or in defending their issues.

When we educate Muslims with reality-based culture, this makes them feel that one has to give concessions regarding some values in exchange for other more important values – for we know that there is no generality *'ām* without having special cases *khāṣ*, and that all Islamic morals include exceptions that allow one to give concessions to one Islamic moral line on the basis of the importance represented by the positive aspect in this line in comparison with the other.

Giving concessions

Q33 – Some of them (the refugees) resort to methods which imply that they are not-religious Muslims of Islam such as letting their wives take off their *hijāb* to take the photograph needed for nationality purposes?

A – I imagine that non-Muslims look down on those who do that, for they respect the person who adheres to his national or religious dress, and respect the person who preserves the elements of his personality, whether religious or national. Perhaps the value of the Western mentality is in its respect for human freedom. So, if a Muslim believes that his wife's *hijāb* will bring about a negative view of him, then he should know that his wife's *hijāb* actually may bring a positive view of him from non-Muslims, since if a man cannot be faithful to his religion how can he be loyal to other people?!

I remember a story that happened at the beginning of the (last) century, when Lebanese emigrants, some of whom were Muslims, used to go to the Ford car factories in Michigan, Detroit, which was trying to attract workers from the East. Some emigrants told me that a group of them stopped praying for fear of making a negative impression that would lead to the loss of some of their rights etc. But there was one person who offered his prayers at his workplace: when the lunch hour started, he would immediately go to prayer, then

come back to work. The workers' supervisor noticed him (doing this) and said to him: 'We have given you the lunch hour for lunch – what are you doing in it?' He said: 'Do you see me neglecting my work?' He said: 'No, but what do you do in this period?' He answered: 'I pray.' So, he told him: 'In that case, you may leave work half an hour early so that you can rest and offer your prayers!' When the others came to him and said that they were Muslims too, he did not accept it.

And when the month of Ramadan arrived, the aforementioned person was fasting while the others did not. The supervisor asked him and he told him that he was fasting in the month of Ramadan, so he gave him some time off to rest. The others objected, but he told them: 'You are not Muslims!'

We believe that many non-Muslims respect the person who adheres to his religion. In fact, they might have more confidence in him, since he who does not betray Allāh does not betray people, and he who betrays Allāh will betray people.

Leniency over doing what is prohibited

Q34 – Some people are lenient about eating forbidden foods, especially in the period that precedes obtaining refugee status, on the account of the fact that they are unable to stay on vegetarian foods for so many months.

A – It is not permitted to eat forbidden foods, except in compelling cases, and 'compelling' means a person fears for his life or health, and even then he should eat only the essential amount (of the forbidden foods), (exactly) as when eating the meat of the dead animal. So, he is not allowed to do so, but Allāh put a limitation on it in His saying: **'but whoever is compelled through necessity intending neither to sin nor to transgress, shall incur no guilt'**

2:173. And 'compelling', in this regard, means that if he does not eat, he will die or incur serious harm to his health.

Moving around the obscurities

Q35 – Some of us put themselves in the place of obscurity.

A – It is something recommended not to be done for a person to put himself in places where he might be accused (of doing the forbidden) – and whoever exposes himself to accusations, should not blame the one who thinks badly of him. The matter may reach the forbidden status if it leads to the dishonour of the believer, since the believer is not allowed to dishonour himself, just as he is not allowed to dishonour others.

Q36 – There are some jobs with a certain obscurity, such as working in companies that produce forbidden products, such as liquor, pork, chemical weapons etc.

A – It is not allowed to work in companies producing liquor or chemical weapons. But our opinion (ruling) concerning companies producing cans of pork is that these can be sold to those who regard it as allowable – although avoiding (such jobs) is better.

Q37 – And employment in Western banks that operate the interest (system)?

A – If the job of the Muslim is related to interest legislation, or implementing or preparing the ground for it, then this is not allowed, otherwise it is allowed.

Q38 – Social Security in Western countries guarantees a proper level of living for every refugee, including housing and healthcare. However, some refugees insist on doing illegal work, which is

punishable by law, even if it (the law) turns a blind eye to it in certain circumstances.

A – I do not allow this because it goes against the contract, and Allāh the Most High says: **'O Believers! Fulfil your obligations regarding contracts.'** 5:1.

Opening up to non-Muslims

Q39 – Living in Western society, we may have positive relations with some people, in exchanging congratulations, letters, invitations, so that a door for dialogue about Islam and our countries can be opened. What is your opinion of this kind of exchange?

A – We emphasize that any Muslim who has the ability to protect himself from the influence of non-Muslims, and the ability to influence them, has to actively engage with non-Muslims so as to give them real and true moral image (of Islam), and the living image of the Islamic line, Islamic intellect and Islamic customs and traditions.

We know that the first Muslim society had emphasized this exchange. For although the Muslims were living different lives from the Jews and others, they did not find any problem between the Muslims and the others, to the extent that the Prophet (sawa) emphasized, in a religious document, the issue of co-existence and the covenant with the others in a way that guaranteed the rights of a mixed Muslim society.

Q40 – Some may adhere to rulings that are perhaps strange, such as: 'It is not allowed (that you) initiate a greeting to a non-Muslim'. How correct is this?

A – One may find in the rulings some elements which indicate that the matter is that the greeting word *as-salām* (i.e. peace) indicates the

complete opening up between you and the other party so that you are in a state of 'peace' with him in both your mind and heart.

Where the reality is that you are living with others who do not believe in 'peace' with Islam, this might be complicated, because you oppose their thinking, something which would create a partition between you and them; and thus there will be, at the very least, a state of opposition between your mind and theirs and between your heart and theirs, in what your heart feels and their hearts feel, or between your behaviour and theirs. This might be a peculiarity of the word *as-salām*, for we gather from traditions that in the past the infidels used to greet the Muslims by saying: *as-sām 'alaykum* (without the *l*, i.e. death to you!), as happened when some Jews said to the Prophet (sawa): *as-sām 'alaykum*, thinking that the Prophet (sawa) would not notice this play on with the words. But the Prophet (sawa) answered him: *wa 'alayk* (and to you). 'Āyshah (the Prophet's wife), who was by the Prophet's side, rebuked the Jew and spoke with him harshly, but the Prophet (sawa) told her: **'O 'Āyshah! If the obscene words had been personalized it would have been an example of bad behaviour; gentleness cannot be put onto something without making it nicer and cannot be taken away from something without making it worse; and surely Allāh is gentle and loves gentleness, and gives for gentleness what He does not give for violence.'** And he said to her, as the narration recounts, that as he had answered his words with something similar the matter ended there, so why (add) cruelty?

The matter can be related to some circumstances in which the Muslims were then living with non-Muslims, but the scholars ruled in an absolute manner on the basis of some narrations that forbid initiating a greeting with infidels. However, if this matter (ruling) is

confirmed in its legal dimensions through the narration, then this is so at the primary (ruling) level. As for the secondary (ruling) level, however, when the best interests of the Muslims in a non-Muslim society are served by reasoning and talking with them in the most courteous manner and with good speech, the greeting question arises, especially by saying the greeting word the Muslim implies his adherence to the Islamic greeting, as a matter of choice, something which links the matter to characteristics of the Islamic personality to which the Muslim adheres, so that even in his greeting he does not substitutes with non-Muslim equivalents.

What makes greeting of no problem Islamically is that the Muslim, especially when he is communicating with those who do not know the Arabic language, can greet them with the greetings common in that society, or with the greetings common in our society in the morning and evening.

This matter relates to the word *as-salām* (peace) and not the act of greeting itself, for Allāh the Most High wants us to greet the others in the most courteous manner: **'And say to my servants that they should only say those things that are best'** 17:53, which does not refer to contact with Muslims only, but with all people. This applies to also all verses which show that it is obligatory to return the greeting in the same way: **'When a greeting is offered to you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous or (at least) of equal courtesy; Allāh surely takes account of all things.'** 4:86. This implies that Islam wants the Muslim to be a person who opens up to others in a way that appeals to their hearts, changes their feelings and makes them open up (to him).

Q41 – In this regard, there are also narrations that the Imams (as) used to visit non-Muslims when they were ill.

A – I believe that the matter does not require any further analysis, because the Islamic line is the line of gentleness with all people: **'Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation and reason with them in the most courteous manner.'** 16:125. So, if reasoning has to be conducted in the most courteous manner, and dealing with problems or intellectual struggle has to be conducted in the most courteous manner, why not also normal human relations in the society where the Muslims live among others?

I believe that the general moral issues, which Islam has fixed in a comprehensive manner, are sufficient to prove that greeting all people (human beings) is recommended (*mustaḥabb*).

Q42 – According to Western norms, shaking hands is a means of exchanging respect, and so when you refrain from doing that, you may be showing disrespect to the other person; hand-shaking between a man a woman has almost no sexual meaning. How does the Islamic law view such a situation?

A –Islamic law has put certain restraints on the sexual issue that starts from the first principle of restricting the possibilities of excitement, even if they are very slight. Because of this, it made it forbidden even to look at certain (body) parts in certain circumstances. Also, it did not encourage (social) mixing in which a man and a woman stay together alone, or touching, one kind of which is shaking the hands. It was narrated that the Prophet (sawa) said, when taking the *bay'ah* (oath of allegiance): **'I do not shake hands with women.'** And it was narrated from the Imams of *Ahlul*

Bayt (as): **'A man must not shake hands with a woman who is not unmarriageable, unless they are behind a partition, and he must not press her hand.'**

Islam tries to prevent the negative aspects in man-woman relations through a comprehensive education system, under which – if you observe each element on its own – you would not see a lot of negative effects, but if you combine them and consider them usual things, they can produce an unusual thing. Thus, at the primary (ruling) level, it is not allowed for a man to shake hands with a woman who is not unmarriageable, and it is not allowed for a woman to shake hands with a man who is not unmarriageable.

That said, there is a general Qur'ānic basis, in His saying: **'and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion'** 22:78, and: **'Allāh wants to ease things for you, and He does not want to put you to difficulties.'** 2:185. So, if refraining from shaking hands causes intense difficulty (*haraj*) for the Muslim, then he is allowed to do it (shake hands); 'intense difficulty (*haraj*)' here is the psychological or physical hardship that cannot be normally borne due to the objective circumstances that surround the psychological or physical situation.

Thus the Muslim who lives in these societies may use this permission in the extent to which he avoids this intense difficulty, and tries as hard as he can to avoid situations in which he finds himself forced to do so.

Q43 – In the case of shaking hands, do we have to explain to the woman in question that the Islamic religion prohibits us from doing this? Isn't there hardship in such a policy?

A – I said that the intense difficulty is the psychological hardship that one experiences when facing this situation. This matter (intense

difficulty) may arise from the difficulty of talking to the other person, with whom shaking hands is forbidden, about this Islamic subject, or perhaps time does not allow for that, or circumstances may make it impossible, or the other person might take a negative view towards this issue to the degree that would put pressure, by its negativity, on you and your circumstances, status and spirit.

Therefore, the matter will have to be studied by the person who is subjected to it – a religious study that takes account of and observes one's obligations towards Allāh, in the light of His saying: **'Nay, man has insight on his soul. Even though he may put up excuses.'** 75:14,15.

Islamic societies

Q44 – Islamic societies represent the legal framework for Islamic activities in the West, by making themselves accessible to the Muslim masses on the one hand, and to the Western institutions that have dealings with the emigrants on the other. What is your advice to those working in them?

A – The value of the Islamic societies working in the West can be divided along two lines:

The first line, and it is the fundamental one, is care for the Muslims, especially the emigrants: care for their intellectual and scientific endeavours, and their individual and social affairs, so as to make these harmonise with their interests, issues and circumstances. This is because these societies represent the 'incubator' of the Muslims' minds, hearts and lives, and their role is one of fostering and nurturing, surrounding the children with care, and developing them and teaching them the Book and wisdom.

Such a role cannot be undertaken (and fulfilled) except by religious believers, who are concerned about Islam and Muslims, through their (self-accepted) obligation to Allāh the Most High, and who take care of (the Muslims') issues. The supervisors in the Islamic societies should be from amongst the truthful, God-fearing believers, and everyone must listen to Allāh the Most High: **'O Believers! Have fear of Allāh and stand with those who uphold the cause of truth'** 9:119 – i.e. those who are truthful to Allāh in their deeds and words.

The second line is the call to Islam. I recommend meetings between Muslim intellectuals, whether religious scholars or not, at these societies and study their plans for the call to Islam and to explain the virtues and positive aspects of Islam in a way that can attract non-Muslims to Islam so that they (non-Muslims) become confident in its ability to solve man's problems, take care of his humanity and plan for his salvation. I find that this is one of the key Islamic obligations for every propagator. This obligation concerns only some (of the Muslims) where Muslims are numerous and (so) some of them (are enough) to carry out the call (to Islam); but if their numbers are fewer than what we need, then the obligation will be on everyone.

Some may say that there are social and cultural roles which the others (non-Muslims and non-religious Muslims) are capable of, for instance, we may need a school in which non-religious individuals who possess teaching experience will have to teach, or the society may take up a social line involving non-religious individuals who possess (the ability to carry out) some social activity. I do not say that we should not cooperate with them, but I say that we should not give the leadership or administration to them.

Another point which I have to draw the attention to in this regard, is that non-religious people have their perspectives, and we must not

make them feel any complex towards us, but rather we should open our hearts to them and work to guide them and to benefit from their powers, even if this only brings them nearer to the Islamic atmosphere if we fail to make them truly religious individuals.

Islamic 'incubators'

Q45 – In your speeches to emigrants in European countries, you emphasise the necessity of establishing Islamic 'incubators', such as schools and mosques, and the necessity for emigrants to gather in nearby areas, as the Jews have done.

A – Even peoples other than Jews, such as Pakistanis, Lebanese or other communities. What is important is that the emigrant community should preserve its personality, since their members, within a large county, gather in one society and one neighbourhood to form a coherent presence. These gatherings are similar to ghettos – not in the negative sense, but in that they share common traditions, habits and language. For the Muslim, they protect his identity, language, children and religion, and establish a kind of social monitoring inside its independent entity.

Q46 – Are you, therefore, in favour of the rationalisation (improvement) of emigration and strengthening its foundations, as opposed to the calls to stop emigration or doubts about the emigrants' intentions?

A – When emigration is subject to general planning or the planning of certain societies or institutions, I call for benefiting from the culture and experiences of others. (Also,) we cannot spread Islam in the world except through human contact; it is not enough to present thinking, books or films on Islam, but these must be accompanied

with a Muslim presence that is living the vitality of Islam and presents to people the moral Islamic image.

The Westerners' monitoring of the behaviour of Muslims

Q47 – The emigration of Muslims has allowed Westerners to be in direct touch with Islam, whereas previously they used only to hear or perhaps read about it, but only few of them have visited Islam in its own areas and countries. Now, however, the Westerner views Islam through the behaviour of Muslims. The Westerner is, generally, misled by the media when it comes to Islam, and when he sees his Muslim neighbour or work colleague, he monitors and analyses his behaviour and may be affected by it. There are Westerners who have embraced Islam as a result of exemplary Islamic behaviour. How could we combine what we claim to be our principles and values, as shown in our books and narrations, and our behaviour and practices?

A – The problem is that the Islamic reality, in the Islamic countries, may lie in the teaching of morals and values that are somewhat removed from the concerns of both the family and society. We even find an emphasis on acts of worship as a body more than the emphasis on them in terms of the spirit. It is essential that those who emigrate know that they are responsible before Allāh for any negative image that they present to others through their behaviour, as they are responsible before Allāh in their religious obligations when they deviate from the line of religious adherence. It is narrated that Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) said to some of his companions: **'Good (behaviour) from everyone is good, (but) from you it is better because you are linked to us; and ugly (behaviour) is ugly from everyone, (but) from you it is uglier because you are linked to us.'**

A negative act may have one dimension when the Muslim is living in a Muslim society, and this is the personal dimension – whether

negative or positive. However, when he lives in a non-Muslim society, there are personal as well as public dimensions, and he is not allowed to be relaxed about the public dimension because it does not affect him alone but affects the Islamic line in its values and principles, as it also presents a view on the Muslim reality.

Divorce in Western courts

Q48 – Regarding divorce that takes place in Western courts – can it be regarded as Islamically legal divorce?

A – No, because divorce in Islam requires a certain form and certain conditions. Therefore, if the judge is not Muslim, the Muslim woman who is divorced under Western law is not legally divorced. These days, we face a lot of problems when disputes between married couples occur and the wife turns to civil law which (then) divorces her, but the husband has not divorced her according to Islamic law. There might have been basis on which an Islamic judge would not have granted a divorce. Therefore, this issue has been aggravating family problems as a result of these laws.

Q49 – Some may take advantage of the situation by divorcing his wife before the local authorities so that she receives a salary (from the Social Security), but he continues to treat her as his Islamically legal wife, something which would negatively affect the children who witness the contradiction between their parents' divorce claim and the real situation; this is in addition to the (negative) view that the government departments will have if this fraud is discovered.

A – I rule that this is absolutely forbidden (*ḥarām*), without any reservations. This is because, first, it is lying even if before an infidel; for in cases of lying, we do not look at the one who is lied to, but at

the one who has lied. Islamically, one has to be truthful to oneself and to all others.

Second, this leads to dishonour of the believer, since people in Western countries are treated as equal. If the authorities or the people see this woman believer in her Islamic dress (*ḥijāb*), and a Muslim man, performing his prayers and fasting, living together like husband and wife but without a legal marriage relationship, it gives a negative image of all Muslims.

Third, there will be a negative effect on the children who belong to their mother and father as parents, but see that their father and mother agree that any newly born children are born as illegitimate according to the law.

There is a fourth point that concerns the contract aspect, and that is: the father and mother have entered that country as refugees, and this implies that there is a contract between the host state and the refugee that he has to abide by the laws of the country. Naturally, the state does not permit people to ignore or disobey its laws. Therefore, his act in this case is a breach of the contract. Therefore, this matter relates to the contract aspect, in addition to the other Islamic legal matters.

Chapter 3

The Problems Facing Expatriates

Problem 1: Assimilation of the (new) arena

Problem 2: The shaking (weakening) of belief

Problem 3: Aimlessness

Problem 4: Looking for the negative points (only)

Problem 5: The undermining of the features of Islamic identity

Problem 6: Indulging in materialistic life

Problem 7: Taking advantage of the rulings (*fatāwā*)

Problem 8: Laziness

Problem 9: Between being bedazzled by the West and adapting to it

Problem 10: Abandoning (Islamic) guidance meetings

Problem 11: The retreat from politics

Problem 12: Reliance on an external (putting all trust in) solution

Problem 13: Submission to the status quo

Problem 14: Reluctance concerning women's activities

Negative phenomena

Problem 1: Assimilation of the (new) arena

Q1 – One of the first problems that faces the refugee is his inability to assimilate the (new) arena that he finds himself in: he does not know the language, habits or social and political situation of the host country, which exposes his weakness before his host and in his new life there. In facing this problem, people can be divided into four categories: some will wither in these societies, because they come from a Bedouin society, or a small village or a backward city to a society with all the tools of progress, speed and organised living; others will succumb to the negative atmospheres of these societies and so start looking for whatever will help them to achieve their goals and satisfy their present needs, and therefore they become corrupted and maybe even deviant; some will waver; and some will justify defeat before the temptations and live according to their own tastes. In light of this categorization, how it is possible to co-exist with these places of emigration?

A – The Islamic line in these environments and locations is that the emigrant should distance himself from any arena in which he cannot have control of himself, i.e. where he loses his balance in viewing things, regardless of what he believes them to be or his thinking.

This is why Islam has made it forbidden to travel to countries where your religion will weaken. It says to you: you are Muslim and this means that you believe in Islam and adhere to it, therefore your responsibility before yourself and your Lord is to strengthen this Islam, develop and guard it. Naturally, travelling to any area where you have not got the weapon with which you can fight, or the power through which you can keep your balance, means that you are going to succumb to this reality, whether due to lack of thinking, wavering – which makes you live in a bitter dilemma in that reality – or

through trying to fool your self by justifying its errors without real conviction or serious intellectual analysis.
Hence, those who are prone to such internal weakness, which is of the variety that will lead to succumbing, are not allowed the permission which is granted to refugees who can guarantee to preserve their religion, for otherwise they risk losing this life and the Hereafter.

Q2 – This (argument) can be presented when talking about protection from asylum's negative consequences. But now, for those who have already gone there, what can be done?
A – Those who already live there because they have fled from difficult and cruel circumstances have – themselves – to come up with plans, guidelines, codes of restraint and the leadership that can stabilise the reality for them, exactly like the warrior who is getting overwhelmed in battle and loses his weapons but refuses to be defeated – he must confront the situation with whatever weapon or experience is available to him. Therefore, they must bring in callers (to Islam) to prepare Islamic 'incubators', such as mosques, *Ḥusaīniyyas*, schools or clubs, and to fill the spare time of the generation with whatever can distance them from filling their time with those things that tempt them towards deviation.

Problem 2: The shaking (weakening) of belief
Q3 – In the European lands of emigration, the problem is not just the allowable and the forbidden *(ḥalal* and *ḥaram*). The greatest question is: how can we convince the Eastern individual, who has become alienated from his own environment, of the existence of Allāh the Most High, the necessity of worship, good deeds, sacrifice

etc? (For) he starts thinking philosophically about everything, starting with God and ending up with the smallest of things.

A – We have to study the internal landscape of these people, whether regarding the intellect, senses, feelings or the negative impulses (of the soul), to see whether this individual is serious in what he is talking about and in discussing belief in God – is he serious or not? If he is not serious, but just trying to justify his stance of deviation regardless of any conviction he might hold in this or that (belief), then it is very difficult to talk with him about intellect or emotion, because he has decided not to respond; if you make him enter one door (of argument), he will go out from another. The only opportunity that he has of getting back his internal balance is to attack his justifying state of mind, through which he wants to escape from reality.

Another person maybe serious about belief but doubts have crept into his mind, and the negative impulses of the soul have crept into his heart; he should allow us to talk to him using instinctive reasoning and also scientific reasoning. We should try to discover the methods by which we can open up his mind and heart. I believe that the proof of the existence of God and believing in Him is not difficult; rather it is as the narration says: **'The number of roads to God equals the number of the people created.'**

Problem 3: Aimlessness

Q4 – There is the problem of aimlessness, which some people suffer from because they have no firm or clear methodology their lives. The ways in which people might become aimless here are numerous, in addition to weakness in social ties and relations and moral decline. How is it possible to minimize this?

A – This is the image of the reality where the individual does not have a base. In fact, the people who live in these countries do not

feel this aimlessness because they proceed from a basis that is perhaps lost in the meaning of truth, but not lost in the meaning of feelings and religious adherence. The people there have organized their affairs on the basis that life is the opportunity beyond which there is no other opportunity, because they do not want to look into what comes after life.

Therefore, what is going on here is that those talking about aimlessness do not possess what they have had in terms of the values that fill the minds, hearts, souls and life, and have come into a reality with which they are not convinced, although it imposed itself on them. Therefore, you see them living in a puzzling conflict between the pressures of residues from the past and the pressures of the present.

These aimless individuals, like any aimless individual and in any location – East or West – need the preparation of a natural climate – cultural, spiritual and social – that will help to direct them to their selves, and to bring them back to what they used to consider as unchangeable in their lives, so as to create the religious, social, political and spiritual atmospheres that can fill their selves, whether through dialogue, a pure environment, or through identifying the negative sides of the reality in which they live, and under the influence of which they are about to succumb.

Problem 4: Looking for the negative points (only)

Q5 – Some emigrants do not learn well from the societies they have emigrated to, in such areas as respecting opinion, scientific research, abstaining from anger and emotional reaction in arguments and dialogue, dealing with life without complications or benefiting from their existence there by developing their practical capabilities and

knowledge. Some get into the habit of searching for the negative sides of life and working according to them.

A – The problem of these people is that they live in permanent co-existence with the negative sides and points of weakness that were found in their own society, so that they feel foreign when they are separated from it because they have lived for a period of time in the environment which they have left, which does not respect others; instead they move with emotional reactions and nervousness and see life as a complicated problem, complicating the simple. So, such people will be living in a new world, but they erect a partition which prevents them from being influenced by the positive sides of this (new) world, because they do not want to consider the existence of negative sides of their old world in comparison with the positive sides of this world.

We may need to talk to these people about the positive aspects of this world, on the basis that these are the positive aspects of the path along which our world should proceed, in that it is one foundation of the Islamic value – provided that they are living even the ghost of the Islamic values in their own thinking.

We can say to them (amongst other similar things) that respecting all others is an Islamic value and not reacting emotionally or angrily is an Islamic value, and so on. Then we should try to work towards preparing the educational atmospheres which deepen this side of their personality, perhaps through explaining that we have to live in a world in which those who react in this way, or who do not respect others etc, are not themselves respected. To live in this world, we have to move within it in line with these values, which are – in fact – ours.

Problem 5: The weakening of the features of Islamic identity

Q6 – The features of Islamic identity are weakening and receding in the West. How can we uphold the principles and values of Islamic civilization in atmospheres that would – by nature – wipe out these features?

A – It is very difficult to implant the features of Islamic civilization inside the Muslim living in a Muslim society that is surrounded by a non-Islamic society that has all the qualities of strength. This is just like planting winter fruits in summer and vice versa, Civilized growth in anyone's personality requires a civilized climate, whether from the inside or the outside, that can prepare for him the ground upon which to open up to its features and tendencies.

It is difficult to succeed in this unless we are able to create inside our societies – whether through guidance or practice – a psychological barrier against this reality, but can be done by stirring up the elements of belief, spirit and pride in identity. In this regard, we remember how the first Muslims who entered these (foreign) societies and – assisted by a feeling of strength, a pioneering spirit and social leadership – were able to transform a deviant society into a straight one and an infidel society into a believing one, as happened in Andalusia, as well as in other places such as Indonesia and Malaysia, which joined Islam without war.

Q7 – In this regard, we notice that the problem is more dangerous for future generations.

A – Naturally, if we push an Islamic minority into a big non-Muslim sea, the high waves will sweep over all of them when they try to stand against the current. Therefore, we have to try to strengthen this generation and to establish Islamic 'incubators', whether at schools, mosques, clubs or Islamic centres, which can rescue this young man

and that young woman from any sense of emptiness that might be filled with the temptations or opposing tendencies that others present. This is the responsibility of Muslims who emigrate to these countries, because the person who emigrates to a country where his religion, or that of his family, weakens is committing a grave, forbidden act (*ḥaram*): **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones'** 66:6. Moreover, those who have lost their selves and their families shall be amongst the losers on the Day of Judgement.

Therefore, Muslims who want to emigrate to these countries have to plan with all power at their disposal, even if it means cutting down on their food, for the school which they will establish, and for the mosque or *Ḥusalniyyah*, the cultural, social or sports club that can take in the new generation, male and female.

Problem 6: Indulging in materialistic life

Q8 – Some who become rich or financially well-off look down on those who are less well-off, and fail to learn from some rich people to be humble. Is this a test of materialistic things and money, and their influence on behaviour and life?

A – Such people exist in both the West and the East because they proceed from a small soul that succumbs to money, so that money becomes greater than them. Naturally, with such people we need a belief-dependent education that reminds them of Allāh, death and the Hereafter, similar to the method used by Korah's (Qārūn's) folks, who told him: **'His people said to him: "Do not exult (in your riches); Allāh does not love the exultant. And seek, by means of that which Allāh has given you, the Home of the Hereafter, and do not forget your share in this world; and be good to others as Allāh has been good to you, and do not seek (occasions for)**

mischief in the land, for Allāh does not love those who do mischief.'" 28:76,77. We have to mobilize the educational and spiritual forces that can make a person know the truth about richness – the richness of money – which has no value in comparison with the richness of the soul.

Q9 – In the same regard, there is a noticeable spiritual shortage, due to a lack of spiritual meetings. And while some Europeans, who have become disenchanted with the materialistic world and search for salvation, are inclined towards Sufism, you find Muslims using weak excuses to abstain from spiritual meetings.

A – Such Muslims regard spiritual issues as things of the homeland. We must enforce these atmospheres in thoughtful ways, even if we have to enter their homes to recite supplications there, to pray with them and their families, or to discuss with them our responsibilities which Allāh the Most High wants us to carry out. Also, we have to try to improve the atmospheres in the mosques, *Ḥusaīniyyahs* and clubs so as to attract them one way or another to the useful things (activities) that we can present to them.

Q10 – Regarding women – whether wives or daughters – we notice an overwhelming state of indulgence and vanity in make-up, jewellery and luxurious clothes that are a great burden on husbands and fathers, something which causes many problems, one of which is divorce?

A – I believe that the problem over there is also a problem here. One must study the nature of the strength of these pressures on the man, whether a father or husband, and what methods of opposing influence he has at his disposal, so as to try to strike a balance between the value and the reality of these things.

Q11 – Enjoying the materialistic life and the adoption of its values weaken the concepts of reward for noble deeds and helping the believers. How do you see this problem?

A – I believe that they (emigrant Muslims) live in a world in which there is no place for non-materialistic values; even religious values have become like materialistic things for them. This is why churches introduced music and similar things to attract people by appealing to their ears and eyes etc. Naturally, for the person who has lived in a conservative atmosphere, when he starts living in an atmosphere that is exposed to a degree of breaking loose and free to the point of deviation, will be bedazzled by that society and might as a result unconsciously feel that he was living in deprivation in his past life; so if he is given the choice between returning to his homeland and staying in the country which offers him (the fulfilment of) sins and lust on a golden plate, he will prefer to stay in the latter.

The second point concerns the lack of spiritual atmospheres and the lack of religious guidance at a level at which it meets with the general conscience of these people and takes their memory back to the spiritual atmospheres in which they lived (before). We have always said that it is Islamically obligatory on all the people who emigrate to prepare the (appropriate) spiritual atmospheres for themselves, through prayer meetings, guidance, lessons and similar means that help to make them live in their land of emigration as they used to do in their country, so that the traditions in which they opened up and grew up – such as celebrating the birthdays or the anniversaries of the deaths of the Prophet (sawa) and the Imams (as) – would move dynamically with them. Also, I call upon religious scholars to go there to show how to live the Message responsibly. Perhaps the problem in many of these lands of emigration is the partisanship etc that we have mentioned, which deprives the general atmosphere of

the spirituality that meets in Allāh without barriers, and where each group has its own god or prophet or imam whom they prevent others from coming to.

Problem 7: Taking advantage of the rulings (*fatāwā*)

Q12 – It has been noticed – not only in the European lands of emigration, but also in all places of emigration – that people have taken advantage (abused) the ruling (*fatwā*) which allows women to dance at weddings, so that girls dance, to certain music, as if they were professional dancers.

A – We agree with Sayyid al-Kho'iyy that dancing is allowable at weddings and on other occasions on the condition that it is not lewd, and that the music is not (sexually) arousing in a way that induces a state of sexual 'emergency'. There is no problem with that, on the condition that the atmosphere is not one of profligacy and (sexual) excitement, for dancing has other forms that are represented by soft, calming characteristics that the soul access to this art without instigating any atmosphere that is opposing to the spiritual values.

Q13 – This is a secondary problem. The fundamental difficulty is that some rulings (*fatāwā*) face different problems, such as:

- Abusing the ruling, for example adhering to only a part of it – the part that conforms to one's tastes;
- Widening the area in which the ruling works, i.e. making the ruling absolute (*iṭlāq al-ḥukm*) and, hence, valid in areas that are outside the subject to which the ruling applies (*muqayyadah*).

So, how shall we educate the followers in the rulings, to prevent them (the rulings) from being abused, not taken seriously, going unheeded or rejected altogether?

A – Education in the rulings is what solves the problem, because it establishes for them the Islamic legal and realistic boundaries and prevents their abuse; also, it give the believer the foundations on which the differences in rulings are based and makes him knowledgeable in the boundaries (areas in which the ruling works) according to whichever Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*) he follows.

Problem 8: Laziness

Q14 – There is another problem that we encounter in many of our places of emigration and that is the tendencies towards laziness and indolence, and consequently the lack of productive, innovative movement, beyond very narrow limits.

A – When we study this matter realistically, we find that laziness might come from a lack of any great concern for the goals that a person aims for in his life. This is in addition to the state of tiredness and loss which some may have experienced in their recent past, something which would make the person succumb to lazy comforts, in order to remove the burden of that tiredness, as though he feels that he has arrived at the 'peace bank'.

The impact of physical and psychological tiredness on the goal could be to cancel the goal (itself) from one's consciousness. I imagine that some people who have emigrated or who have been driven out of their homelands, especially those who have experienced the pressures of prison, poverty and cruel social conditions, have used up all the energy which they might have had for the great goals. This has pushed them close to desperation, and made them search for any situation in which they can submit to the feelings of security, and satisfaction and get whatever can be achieved for them in terms of nutritional security, as in 'O Lord, give us this day our daily bread ... but deliver us from evil.' I would imagine that to those who went to

the West, and got some of the positive benefits from Social Security or asylum that were not available in the Eastern countries, whether in their own countries or in the other countries to which they (first) emigrated, this might have made them feel that they had done their share to the cause through the problems, pains and pressures they had experienced, and so they might say to those talking to them, as I have heard some say: 'We have spent twenty or thirty years in the struggle (*jihād*), so now let the others work.' This is a (natural) human state that takes hold of a person when he submits to a sensual and psychological trance in what he thinks about, so that it turns into something similar to the nightmare that he wants to get rid of, in its effects, even if subconsciously.

Q15 – Doesn't your Eminence think that those to whom one kind of freedom, or some degree of it, has been made available have a higher degree of responsibility to meet?

A – I imagine that if they give themselves the opportunity to think about, they will know that they have emigrated from their countries because they wanted to preserve **'Our Lord is Allāh'** and their conduct in the straight path, and this is why they have endured a lot. The value of this is that this line is, at the level of foundation and dissemination, not a geographically local line, nor a time-bound line, but rather the line of procession in this life and the Hereafter, since Islam represents the salvation of man in his life and after his death. Therefore, there is no chance, as far as one's belief in this line is concerned, of abandoning his responsibility of serving this line, whether through serving one's own self – developing the active elements in one's self to strengthen one's belief and to open up to the Lord more – or one's family to protect them from deviation, especially the deviation of atheism, or one's society, by giving it one's

power to achieve the great Islamic goals, a condition that applies whether one is living in one's homeland or outside it. We know that the first Muslims, who emigrated to places all over the world, either from a need to earn their livelihood or on account of conditions in their own countries, felt their responsibility of attracting others to Islam, which resulted in countries of millions of people embracing Islam through (the influence of) merchants and Muslim workers.
Therefore, if such people were to take notice of the depth of their religious belief in their selves and its relation to their fate with their Lord, they would see that this kind of relaxation, laziness and indifference can belittle them within themselves or before other people, who will feel that these people have left their countries under the pressure of having their freedom curtailed and the oppression of their family and those around them, but they live in relaxation as if there was now no problem (at all), or that they had no responsibility to live up to. I believe that they will have to face the belittlement of their selves, and it is one of the worst kinds of belittlement when they realise that they have betrayed their cause, message and even the homeland; they will also be belittled in the eyes of others in this and other respects.

Q16 – In this regard, there is a group of indolent emigrants who simply wait for Social Security benefit and do not undertake any work that might develop their personalities or serve their Islamic causes; how can we encourage these people to get moving and serve the Islamic cause?
A – I imagine that such people live their lives to fulfil their needs, but not as a mission – they say 'our food and drink, dress and homes are the needs on which our lives depend, they are not our mission. But after satisfying these needs, what shall we do?'

The issue is that a man should have a cause through which he can respect his humanity. We have minds, but how do we make them work? We have capabilities, but how do we utilize them? Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (AS) made responsibility before Allāh proportional to these powers when he said: **'Allāh did not bless any person with bounty without an obligation (which he will have to account for in the Hereafter – *ḥujjāh*) for that bounty: Whomsoever Allāh made well off, the obligation on him would be his money – carrying out both obligatory donations and whatever is given voluntarily; and whomsoever Allāh made strong, the obligation on him would be to carry out whatever He ordered him to do and to behave with kindness towards those weaker than him; and whomsoever Allāh made honourable among his people and handsome, he should not deny the rights of the weak because of his honour and looks.'**

Allāh the Almighty says: **'Let there become of you a community that shall call for righteousness, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong (evil); and such men are the ones who will attain felicity'** 2:104; and says: **'The believers, both men and women, are protectors, one of another; they enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong (evil), and attend to their prayers, and render the alms levy, and obey Allāh and His Apostle; on these Allāh will have mercy; Allāh is Exalted in power, All-Wise '** 9:71. Therefore, a person who is not concerned about the issues of his homeland, society, nation and religion is living like an animal, or worse, for he has a mind which he does not use, eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear. These people who sit about in idleness, waiting for handouts from Social Security or from others, are lazy, stale and beyond the realm of life! They are a burden on life because

they live to take and not to give, and they are not respected by Allāh or the people, for Allāh hates the idle.

Q17 – Some refugees refuse to work because what they would earn from work equals the Social Security benefit. 'What is the point of work?' they say. They do not acknowledge that the social status of the worker in the West comes through the respect of others, because his value derives from the value of the work he does.

A – Prosperity (*barakah*) comes from work. Even if you get Social Security benefit, this benefit is fixed, whilst work has potential of growth. Only through work can a man prosper, and reach the level of the very rich.

Problem 9: Between being bedazzled (overly impressed) by the West and adapting to it

Q18 – Some emigrants are clearly bedazzled by the West, a problem that manifests itself when they start imitating Western civilization in dress, haircuts, habits, greetings etc. This expresses one of two things: either they are blindly copying, or they are making adaptations for fear that, as emigrants, they look alien and uncivilized in their new surroundings.

A – Being dazzled by others points to an emptiness inside yourself: you look up to others from a position of inferiority, as if you are a person without a base or roots; and you neglect your own history as if you want to run away from it, or are ashamed of it. This is because you are seeing things from the outside, not looking at their essence. This attitude, which many people from the Third World – especially the Arab World – have, makes them easily bedazzled by the exterior, superficial aspects of the West; what is more, these are often things

which are not respected by many Westerners, such as some outrageous fashions in dress etc.

I believe that we can confront this by deepening religious belief and by emphasizing the positive aspects of our history, affiliations and current reality – which are not devoid of shortcomings but, at the same time, are not devoid of positive points either. One of the problems that we experience in our cultural lives and feelings is that we think only of the shortcomings and disregard the positive points, so that we imagine that the shortcomings surround us completely, and that we are a nation that has to bring other nations to its arenas to give it culture, civilization and advancement etc.

This attitude of inferiority towards our history, society and current reality, when compared to others who (in contrast) think of their positive points and disregard their shortcomings, is what has caused the imbalance and what, in consequence, has brought us low. If, as a culture, we emphasized our positive points and were truthful about the shortcomings of others, we would achieve a balance, since we would find that others have shortcomings that are greater than ours, and that we have positive points which are every bit as great, or even better, than the positive points of the others.

The issue is the one-dimensional approach: talking only about your positive points and the shortcomings of the others, or vice versa. This means exaggeration in this or that aspect, and will be negatively reflected in the balance of the fair view of the reality. But if we combine both the positive points and the shortcomings and talk about our weaknesses and those of the others and our strengths and those of the others, we may be able to prepare a generation that believes in itself through a process of self-criticism and opens up to the others in a process of acknowledging the positive points they have and criticizing the shortcomings they have.

Q19 – The other part of the question concerns going along with the others for fear of being regarded as different.

A – I imagine that such feeling of weakness before others proceeds from lack of any role model when considering the personal elements that are related to faith, conduct, culture etc. The fact is that a girl wearing the veil (*ḥijāb*) may well feel strange in a society that does not wear the veil, and may in any case feel psychological bedazzlement even before all of that. Therefore, we have to make her feel some of the elements of strength that say that, even if they are the majority, the others are not necessarily on the right path.

Second, we should not look only at the dark side of the picture, but to the bright side so that our thinking is independent of the majority that is performing this aspect and the minority that is performing the other.

We should look to the elements of the matter through this question: What are the positive and negative points in (wearing) the veil? And what positive and negative points in not wearing the veil? For if the person is convinced that she is on the right track and that what she is doing represents an element of balance in her freedom, then she will not fall because of the influence of others.

From a third angle, these people should take notice of other people who have loyalty to their nationality, or to their religious or national affiliations, which they preserve in their national dress, traditions and habits. This is why we see that many peoples have not dissolved in the West when they lived there even before these new emigrants. We must, therefore, arm these people with a cultural weapon, a psychological weapon and a national or Islamic weapon. In this regard, we notice that Westerners who come to our countries do not suffer from any complex from their situation because they have the feeling of strength in this respect.

Problem 10: Abandoning guidance meetings

Q20 – A cultural-educational problem: not attending the exhortation, guidance, preaching and religious lessons because 'we are fed up with lectures and exhortations and they have become of no benefit.'

A – This logic has some psychological justifications for these people, although not in the absolute sense. Those who practise exhortation have not renewed their methods and have not understood the areas of emptiness in the lives of non-Muslims or non-religious Muslims, or the points of weakness, the development of their mentality. This is why some preach as they might have preached one hundred years ago, because they have read the books that talk about preaching using the old methods.

I imagine that everyone who has a cause, message or profession must follow the market. It may be a market for selling textiles, daily goods, culture or exhortation and guidance; the preacher (likewise) will have to take account of the development in the goods and the development in the mentality of the people. You have to study reality to succeed in speaking with those living around you.

Q21 – Sir, you face this problem on more than one front; could you please give us some ideas for renewing the methods?

A – In my experience, I have faced reality since I opened up to the belief that there is a new language for the people's cultural dynamic movement and a new mentality, and that people have aspirations that are different from the old ones, and that there is a sort of rebellion against certain traditional concepts. Therefore, I have tried my best to study the influences on people. For instance, I used to read arts and sports newspapers and suchlike because I noticed that the youth is affected by the content of songs and the content of films and so

on. If I did not know the things which affect other people, I used to talk to myself: how can I get through to their way of thinking?
This is why my problem with many traditionalists is that I think in a contemporary way and speak in a contemporary way, without deviating from the fundamental, unchangeable concepts which I believe represent the truth. I believe that I have achieved some success through these experiences, because I have not lived in seclusion from the (younger) generation. Rather, I believe – and I am now heading towards seventy years of age – that I live a life that is in tune with the contemporary outlook development of the (younger) generation as if I belonged to it. I present my experience to many of our brothers who practise the task of social, preaching or cultural guidance. They have to follow the dynamic movement of the generations in their assimilation of things, thoughts and aspirations, in harmony with this or that method.

Problem 11: The retreat from politics

Q22 – There is a problem that is not peculiar to emigrants, but to our active brothers everywhere, and this is their absence from the political arena. They use the excuse that those who are in the forefront (the leaders) have betrayed it (the cause) and we no longer trust them on anything; they have been defeated and are now leading a luxurious life and are no longer living the cause.

A – That a person adopts a dynamic political line means that he has adopted its ideas and moves dynamically towards its goal and lives its concerns, regardless of the people who lead it. Although we do not make light of the problems that occur as a result of the shortcomings of people, it is wrong to view the people as the cause itself – so that if they fall, the cause falls. This view would mean that our ties to the cause are the ties to the person, and this is un-Islamic if we are

talking about the Islamic question, and un-political if we are talking about the political line. The person who adopts a certain cause or a certain line (has to believe) that the cause or the line is bigger than the people involved, even bigger than himself when it comes to his negative psychological state and his dynamic interaction with the cause.

Therefore, we may treat these problems – which arise though luxurious living or selfish leadership – first by trying to correct them, directly or indirectly, with all possible methods, or by trying to drive them (the failed politicians) away from the arena using methods which do not destroy the arena, because they have nothing more to give and have become tired and have nothing to do with the cause anymore, as applies also to their own selves. We might also have to carry out a process of self-criticism, in this regard, for we may recognize the selfishness in them through the selfishness in us, or the deviation in them through the deviation in us, for one is not allowed to appoint oneself a judge of others on the basis that one thinks one has acquired greater culture, loyalty and understanding. In so doing, a person may discover that he himself has become tired of the cause and would like a rest from it, because its responsibilities entail a lot of things which impinge on his work or his pleasures and desires, and so he searches for an excuse – any excuse – to convince himself or the people around him that he is not against the cause but against those at the forefront (the leaders).

The problem in many Islamic movements is that those who live with them or follow them do not study the problems that this or that movement is struggling with, in a realistic, objective way. If they study the problem in a responsible, precise manner they may discover that the error of the leadership or those responsible, as they see it, is not of their (the leaders') choosing, but that the circumstances

surrounding them, and which may surround the whole arena of the Islamic movement – whether these circumstances are political, security-related, economic or social – force this error on them in a way that they will either fall into this error, or cause the movement to fail, or permit in the usurpation of the movement by others. Or, perhaps, they discover that the question is not that those (leaders) have sold the cause, or that they have deviated from it to the level they imagine, but that they are facing difficult circumstances on a personal level, as in any state of human weakness, something which can be dealt with by turning their attention to it, consultation or similar means.

Therefore, the activists in the Islamic movements must be just in their judgment, and objective in their study of the considerations of this judgment, so that they do not inflict injustice on people while striving to be just through it (their judgment).

When following up of a lot those who have left the Islamic movement – from whichever country they come – I have found that the luxuries of life in which they have indulged, especially those who went to the West, have made them feel that they are in a new world in which they want to be compensated for (all) the deprivation they have suffered (in the past), whether in the fulfillment of desires, comfort or money. I heard that one of them said to his friend: 'We have worked for more than 30 or 40 years, and this is enough for us. Let the others work.'

A person who is active in Islam cannot say 'this is enough for us', but rather he should consider the progress of his religion, nation, life and nearness to his Lord. Therefore, I suspect that a lot of these people have become tired of their work, or that they are living with new ambitions for the personal or social profit they are working towards.

I say one thing to all of our beloved brothers and sisters, wherever they are: **'Judge yourself before you are judged.'** Study yourselves well, for the disease might not lie only in those whom you judge, but it might be common to all of you. Man usually looks hard to see a speck in the eye of another person, but does not see the wooden (rod) in his own eye!

Problem 12: Reliance on (putting all trust in) an external solution

Q23 – Don't you find that our brothers in the West, amid the frantic atmosphere of the political media, sometimes put too much trust in – or prefer – a political solution that comes from the West rather than one coming from inside?

A – The problem with many of our brothers – and I'm not speaking only about the emigrants, for I, as part of my Islamic concerns, view the (entire) Islamic movement of the Islamic World in the same way, regardless of the points of differentiation between one Islamic movement and another – the problem with Islamic activists is that they have lived in a state of naivety with regard to their Islamic dynamic movement in their own countries, when they concentrated on one side of the matter only, and that was the violent side, which would often not have resulted if they had taken a closer look at the matter or studied the internal and external objective circumstances surrounding them.

We regard every act of violence within Islam as one of the methods of political action, and so you should not ignore the political element in your country or area when planning an action of violent struggle (*'unf jihādiyy*) or an act of opposition. Thus, some of those who have carried out such violent dynamic action in a state of enthusiasm or emotional reaction have skipped some of the (normal) stages, as if,

using some internal information, they imagine one bomb here and one explosion there or a demonstration here or there would topple the ruler.

These people, when they operate outside their countries, and lacking the political experience in how the arms of the international political octopus stretch into this or that country, feel that – since their experience of using violence did not yield its objectives –positive results will be achieved through ties with the American, British, French or other intelligence services, thus falling into another error. They think that the solution lies with them and, hence, cooperation is essential. We know that cooperation with America, Britain or France means submitting to all the political lines that they are active, in and all the intelligence methods that they operate. They fall into another error when they think that the solution is close at hand especially if they meet an American official in the intelligence services or the American administration, or a British official in the Foreign Office, or the like, who talks to them in some positive way and persuades them that the solution lies with them.

But I imagine that the experiences of peoples (around the world) have proved that any solution in any country has to come from inside that country. Also, a balance must be struck between the dynamic movement of politics and that of violence. Politics is not just a question of making one statement here or there or meeting this or that international or regional official, but it includes even the violence of the opposition, as well as social and religious methods, and all of these can come together to make the people revolt (against a dictator) and to prepare the favourable ground for any international or regional political action that you think might be beneficial to your country's interests, and this can achieve what you want to achieve in that field.

The Palestinians lived for decades outside Palestine and could not do anything for their cause, but when they entered Palestine they were able to attract the attention of the World and direct its attention to their cause and to force through a lot of positive results; this is despite the deviation of this political gain from its natural path through the autonomous authority in a number of ways.

I say to the Islamists that politics is not like an enjoyable film. Do not hit your heads against the wall, rather you should search for any opening in the wall to pass through it. Also, politics is a question of accumulating all elements related to the cause, so as to move it towards great results in whatever field. They (the activists) have to perfect their politics so as to concentrate on the homeland; they should study the books a little, and if they do, let them benefit from the experiences of the others in this field. This is because the problem of many Islamic movements is that they deal with both the inside and the outside with emotional reaction, and I believe that in more than one case the states of emotional reaction that the Islamic movements have undergone is what has pushed them into the wilderness of violence and wilderness of political turmoil.

Problem 13: Submission to the status quo

Q24 – There is another problem: no serious drive for reform, which derives from submission to the status quo; what was not normal in the beginning has now become normal and customary, and does not give rise to objection.

A – Perhaps, the matter requires a deeper look into what was not normal. Why was it not normal? And what is normal now – why is it normal? This questioning, when pursued in an objective way, may reveal that what was not normal was wrong and that the correct thing is (what is viewed as) normal now. The normal direction in this progression now

will make the old thinking wrong. Perhaps the thing that was not normal was subject to circumstances which made it not normal, for the issues of dynamic movement are not fixed: you cannot judge the present in the same way as the past. The past might have its own context which made all endeavours go in a certain direction, while the present, with its new set of circumstances, might make you move in the opposite direction.

It is wrong for Islamists to think that the concepts of dynamic movement are fixed. Jurisprudence rulings themselves change when their subjects change. A certain position may force upon you a stance in the negative line, because the positive line would cause harm to Islam and Muslims. And the negative line may, due to new circumstances, transform unto a positive line, and so you find that the former now poses a new problem for the supreme Islamic interests.

Therefore, in the horizon of dynamic movement, you have to think on the following basis: what are the fixed things that represent the essential elements of life and which do not change over time, and what are the changeable things? Through this analysis, we may be able to find that we are not wrong when living in a new era with different data and consequences to what existed before. When we start a successful revolution, the revolution can move dynamically in terms of absolute concepts, and so come up with brand new slogans that are expressed openly. However, when the revolution starts to move on the ground and transforms unto a state, you may feel that you have to put a stop to all these slogans, since they have been the slogans of the mobilizing stage that have been overtaken by time, and you have to live now in an organizational and planning stage to build the state for which the revolution was initiated. We remember that when the revolution started in China, Mao Tse-tung used to call America 'paper tiger', knowing that she was a tiger with nuclear canines. But he wanted to empty the people's conscience of any fear of America's strength, so that he could

take the people with him to confront America. This is also what Imam Khomeini was thinking when he used the slogans 'Death to America', 'Death to the Soviet Union' and 'Death to Israel'. He wanted to remove from the consciousness of the Muslim people of Iran any fear or horror of America and Russia, which were then the superpowers of the world. However, after the state had been established, it was natural that those slogans had to be reviewed according to the nature of the political reality. This is why we saw that 'Death to the Soviet Union' was later suppressed. Perhaps, the state of Iran, in light of new conditions, shall consider giving up the slogan 'Death to America', but keep the slogan 'Death to Israel' – we do not think that they will (ever) give that up.

I imagine that we must always think that the slogan depends on the stage rather than the cause. The problem of a lot of people, when they accuse a movement of abandoning its principles or history, is that they do not differentiate between the (different) stages, and think that what the movement started at its launch must continue as it confronts new challenges; this is on the one hand.

(On the other hand) a fundamental point, which the Islamic activists have to take notice of, is that those who have formulated the covenant or the methods of the movement may have been under certain intellectual or political influences that might have made them err in their appraisal or awareness of the issues. We have to stop sanctifying leaderships, even the intellectual ones, because sanctifying a non-infallible person, to the degree that this sanctity begins to make him infallible, poses one of the biggest dangers to religious and social movements. There is a difference between respecting someone's ideas and sanctifying them. We, in the East, are fond of personality worship, sanctifying the non-sacred even to the point of sanctifying their mistakes! And if anyone stands up to criticize this sacred person, we revolt against him because he is doing wrong to our sacred things etc.

The problem of the sacred that does not have all the elements of sanctity carried in the meaning of infallibility is a problem that besets a lot of people in a reality which is ruled by men who err as well as do the right thing, but who do not want others to assess them with the probabilities of right and wrong, and their followers do not accept that others discuss them in such terms. We, perhaps, have some such names in the Islamic arena, the staunch worshippers of whom will become agitated if you discuss their ideas in a way in which they (the worshippers) have to admit that the object of their worship is not infallible!

Problem 14: Reluctance concerning women's activities

Q25 – While, in some secular groups, women (enthusiastically) engage in women's activities, we often see that believer sisters are hesitant to undertake such activities or to participate in lectures, conferences, seminars, lessons and social meetings. The bigger problem is that the male-dominated society discourages the sisters, and if it accepts them then it does so only reluctantly and unwillingly. What do you suggest to solve this problem?

A – It is necessary for the female believer to undertake Islamic activities, just as men do, for Islamic history has always moved in that direction. We find that the Prophet (sawa) used to take women with him to war, as too did 'Alī (as), al-Ḥasan (as) and al-Ḥusaīn (as).

We find that the Muslims in the very first stage of the Message, and afterwards in the emigration of the believers (men and women), used to move dynamically in activities for both men and women. And although the Prophet (sawa) did not make fighting obligatory for women, he ordered them to nurse the wounded and give water to the thirsty.

Women's participation with men in the call to Allāh, and in their responsibilities towards the challenges which confronted Muslims, is

historical. As for the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh the Most High said: **'The believers, both men and women, are protectors, one of another; they enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong (evil), and attend to their prayers, and render the alms levy, and obey Allāh and His Apostle; on these Allāh will have mercy; Allāh is Exalted in power, All-Wise '** 9:71. So, if some people say that if a woman goes out to participate in conferences and meetings, this will have a negative effect on her morals, we say (to them) that the moral aspects of the dynamic movement are a condition of the work of both men and women, and while women differ from men in some Islamic practices, such as the veil, we call upon them to be actively involved, provided that this does not contradict any Islamic ruling.

The absence of women from Islamic activity, and political activity, deprives such activities of huge powers, and without them we lose much in the reality of the challenge when we compare the powers that we have and those that the infidel and arrogant forces have. In all areas of Islamic work we must plan for the participation of women, while observing the Islamic legal code that can put practical restraints on it to prevent any violation of the Islamic line.

We must make men aware of this (even) before women, for we still recognize that Eastern society is a male-dominated society that has yet not been transformed into a fully human (male and female) society.

Negative phenomena

(A) Fragmentation

Q26 – Some refugee brothers say: 'We experience many negative phenomena – to different degrees. We present them to your Eminence, hoping for your guidance in getting rid of or reduce their effects. One of which is the fragmentation caused by fragile sensitivities and marginal (unimportant) disputes.'

A – From the start, we have to think that we must not fall before this reality, but have to co-exist with it, as we would with any severe illness that we cannot treat quickly. At the very least we should co-exist with it, and organize our situation and vital affairs, taking account of its existence but without falling before it or losing hope in its treatment and thinking that there is no use trying to reform, and that we are a people that cannot unify for their supreme causes.

The fragmentation they talk about is one of the historical norms that imposes itself on reality, and which the forces of backwardness and ignorance have always operated to transform it into a wild state, in the view of one group regarding another, to the extent that some think of the others in terms of infidelity, deviation, corruption or similar cruel words, and almost accuse them of these things, and this stops the disputing parties from coming together in their personal and general lives.

Your living in expatriate places may provide for you a lively experience of reality, which may present certain situations to you. If we want to study the problems facing you in your social and political arenas one by one, let us take the political problem first. This group follows one political line and the other follows another. But when we examine the two lines closely, we find that they agree in 80% and may differ in 20% of what people (even) in one line differ over when thoughts and methods diverge within the same line. This means that the differences in the two political lines do not rule out agreements between them or enforce a separation, since there is common grounds between them, whether they are Islamic and, therefore, meet in the whole of Islam but differ in some manifestations or practices by which they would arrive at the goals, or non-Islamic moving in the line of change – something which can present more than one opportunity for agreement when confronting the arrogant and

oppressive and unjust forces in this or that country. Such points in common can bring together the Islamists and secular groups, provided that the degree of differences does not force the lines apart. If we want to think – with objective logic that opens up to the supreme causes and goals – about the reason for the differences, we may find that the egotism of some of the people who supervise this line and of those who supervise that line make any meeting between the followers of the two lines impossible. If the lines meet in more than one position, some people may lose the egotism that always tries to claim that it is expressing itself on behalf of the line.

Perhaps, the matter proceeds through the links of this line to a certain axis in time, while the other line has links to another axis. Both axes may be Islamic, or one Islamic and the other not, but essentially the dispute is between the two axes, not between the two lines per se. Therefore, if you think about the goal in which all lines meet, you should strive to study the individuals who work for greater penetration in the name of the cause or the movement. You have to study the nature of this or that axis which tries to emphasize its policy by exploiting these divisions among the Islamic lines or the line that strive for change. We must think about this so that we can confront the situation in a way that reduces the impact of egotism, as well as the influence of the axes.

I do not want to oversimplify the matter by claiming that it is one of those easy matters, but when we think that we have been wrongfully driven off our lands because we said 'Our Lord is Allāh', Allāh has to be everything for us, over and above this or that person, this or that axis and this or that tendency. If we could open our minds and hearts and lives to Allāh, He the Most High shall inspire us with the solution and inspire us to stop worshipping individuals and axes in order to (arrive at) His true service: **'And those who strive in Our**

(cause), We will certainly guide them to Our paths; and verily Allāh is with those who do right.' 29:69.

Therefore, we have to be realistic to understand the reality, for the matter may have proceeded from differences between the Grand Islamic Jurists (*marji'iyyāt*). I feel sadness when I discover that the different authorities, who were (supposed to offer) a solution through the diversity in jurisprudence or Islamic opinions, have become a problem because those who practise it – and I am not talking about the Grand Jurists (*marāji'*) themselves – are practising it under a partisan spirit which has reinforced the familial, racist and nationalist partisanships in these authorities' partisan circles.

You can confront the matter on the basis that the Grand authorities as a whole, in their present state that lacks ambition, represent an Islamic obligation that one wants to fulfil before Allāh because the Grand Jurist (*marji'*) is the proof (*ḥujjah*) before Allāh whose follower (*muqallid*) will have fulfilled his obligations before Allāh the Most High, in that he has followed one of the people of knowledge (*ahluth-thikr*). Also, the question of following (*taqlīd*) is a matter of turning the ignorant towards the knowledgeable – in addition to (the latter) being completely just and straight – similar to the way that one turns to the doctors or engineers. This makes the partisan spirit to the Grand Jurist one of the worst kinds of backwardness, since you are doing so in an area that has no grounds for partisanship. It is unfortunate that the Shi'ite world started to suffer from such ignorant and backward partisanship in this matter, which is a cultural matter as well as being a religious matter.

Therefore, try to turn to your religion, which forbids you from adopting partisanship in favour of one person against another, for the believer is not allowed to be partisans against any other believer, and especially if he is a pious and learned scholar (*mujtahid*). If you

have decided to follow a Grand Jurist who is open to others, you should speak about his positive points without detailing his shortcomings, since this might harm the credibility of the Grand Jurist whom you have decided to follow. I tell you one thing: what you say about the shortcomings of this or that Grand Jurist is something hated by Allāh, because this is backbiting, and causes harm to the believers, and it upsets the Islamic arena to engage it in disturbances which only the enemies of Islam benefit from.

This applies also to other matters that you experience locally, such as a society that works in a certain framework against another society, or a *Ḥusaīniyyah* that sets itself against another. You have to raise yourself up to the level of the challenges which Islam and Muslims are confronting in this age, by thinking in terms of the wide international horizons and not just of one corner here or there, where one group is trying to carve out a kingdom for itself by fighting another. Try to work through the integration formula: the integration of societies, *Ḥusaīniyyahs* and institutions, which can enable everyone to follow one route and agree on one title.

I am presenting these ideas so that you confront reality with a critical mentality, and confront the future with an objective mentality, so that you solve the problems through the diverse elements of this reality.

(B) <u>Slander and defamation</u>

Q27 – This problem has a negative moral profile: the accusations, slander and defamation and diminishing the sanctity (respect) of other believers occur in all places of emigration without exception.

A – These things represent a very big deviation from the line of Islam and the line of Grand Jurists' following (*taqlīd*). When a Muslim accuses another Muslim, this means that his belief dissolves, for as

the *ḥadīth* says: **'He who accuses his brother, his belief dissolves from his heart as salt dissolves in water.'**

The issue of slander is subject to the Most High saying: **'Those who love (to see) scandal spread among the believers will suffer a grievous penalty in this life and in the Hereafter; Allāh knows, and you do not know.'** 24:19.

(Trying to) defame (someone) represents two (evils): backbiting (*ghībah*) and pernicious tittle-tattle (the shuttling of words between people to instigate enmity) (*namīmah*).

These things also represent the grand sins (*kabā'ir*) for which – or for the majority of which – (Allāh) threatened (retribution) with Fire. Therefore, if you fear Allāh and His torture and want His rewards, you must remove yourself from this social fire in which you burn in when it is burning your brotherhood, or your love, purity and piety, before you enter the Fire of *Jahannam*: **'Then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones – prepared for the non-believers'** 2:24!

(C) Spare time (and nothing to do)

Q28 – Here is the refugee or emigrant, well settled financially and legally, and to some extent psychologically, but living in a state of emptiness, with spare time but doing nothing. How could we utilize, for Islam, this area of emptiness in the lives of refugees?

A – The person who emigrated with (to preserve) his religion has to stick to his campaign of defending his religion within himself before he extends it to the others (non-religious Muslims and non-Muslims), for he (originally) wanted to preserve his religion within himself from being defeated by the others. If he is to ignore this side and tries to shun his religion in himself, why doesn't he go back to his country to do whatever the others do or to serve the oppressors, for there is no difference between serving an oppressor in your country and giving

respect to the oppressive Satan who rules within yourself and what is around you and who is around you?

Thus, I believe that refugees have to try to occupy themselves with the Islamic, cultural and social aspects (of their lives), exactly as if they are living in their own country in which they move dynamically through social, cultural and other issues. If they are still loyal to their county, they should benefit from an arena in which they have a lot of freedom to inform others about their country's issues and about the positive results they can achieve for the supreme cause for which that country lives.

(D) (Harmful) gossip

Q29 – And (what about) the problem of the (harmful) gossip (*al-qīl wal-qāl*) and what it entails in terms of backbiting (*ghībah*) and pernicious tittle-tattle (shuttling of words between people to instigate enmity) (*namīmah*) and the destruction of relationships?

A – This problem is not exclusive to expatriates. But emigrants and those evicted from their countries often bring it (with them) as a problem that exists in any Islamic society that does not keep to the lines of Islamic piety. Naturally, this problem calls for more awareness through exhortation and guidance, and more fear of Allāh and hope from him, so that one achieves balance in one's religious adherence. These are among the problems that inflict the greatest negative impact on the Islamic reality.

(E) Weakness of the collective spirit

Q30 – And (what about) the weakness of the collective spirit and is replacement by the spirit of selfishness, as seen in more than one arena?

A – This problem often proceeds from the individualistic education which we have in the East and which many, including those giving guidance, continue to emphasize, distancing the self from the social situation and public responsibilities. Therefore, this matter requires spiritual and social education within the framework of the dynamic movement of the responsibility that Allāh the Most High wants man to bear on his behalf and on the behalf of the society that surrounds him. This is what we can extrapolate from the saying of the Messenger (sawa): **'All of you are guardians (shepherds), and every guardian is responsible for his flock.'**

(F) The inferiority complex

Q31 – And (what about) the feeling of inferiority towards the Westerner, especially among some of our youth?

A – This issue is one of the general humanistic issues, and many people live with the complex that results. I imagine that the basis for this is that the person views the others (Westerners) from one side only and not from all sides. We look closely to the negative points in ourselves in comparison with the positive points in the others, but do not try to study the negative points in the others in comparison with the positive points in us. Therefore, viewing both negative and positive points, in us and in the others, and engaging in a comparison in this regard, should make us feel that we are not inferior, but that (for each) weak point that we have they have a strong point, and (for each) weak point that they have there is a strong point that we can claim.

(G) The feeling of defeat

Q32 – And (what about) the feeling of defeat, loss, desperation and hopelessness, especially among some of our elders?

A – We can read the Most High's saying: **'So do not lose heart, nor fall into despair, for you must gain the upper hand if you are true in faith. If you have suffered a defeat (are touched by a wound), the enemy has suffered a similar defeat (has been touched by a similar wound); these days, among all mankind, we alternate (between victory and defeat) so that Allāh may know those who believe, and so that He may take to Himself from your ranks martyrs – witnesses (to truth); and Allāh does not love the wrong (evil)-doers'** 3:139,140; and His saying: **'If you are suffering hardships, they are suffering as you suffer, but you have hope from Allāh, while they have none'** 5:104; and His saying: **'And never give up hope of Allāh's soothing spirit of mercy; truly, no one despairs of Allāh's soothing spirit of mercy except the infidels'** 12:87; and His saying: **'Say: "O Allāh! Sovereign of all sovereignty, You bestow sovereignty on whom You will, and You strip sovereignty from whom You will; You exalt whomever You will, and You abase whomever You will; in Your hand is all good; verily, You have power over all things."'** 3:26. When we study all these, we conclude that your fall or loss in one round does not mean losing the (whole) war, and that your failure in one experience does not mean failing in all other experiences, and that the problems which one is currently suffering do not mean that you will never find the solution. Therefore, everyone must live his life with the others so as to regard the matter as a struggle in which you may fall in one position but stand up in another, and lose one round but win another.

Our study of the historical reality of man's dynamic movement in life makes us feel that there can never be any room for hopelessness. Also, our opening up to the belief in Allāh, His absolute power, His mercy and His care for His faithful servants makes us feel the rebirth of hope in our minds, hearts and lives.

(H) Lapses in shyness (modesty)

Q33 – And (what about) the emergence of lapses in shyness (modesty) among some of our young men and young women?

A – This is quite natural when they live in free societies (with) trends of sexual freedom that place no value on shyness (modesty). This is one of the problems that our young men and young women experience in the Western societies, and it calls upon us to create in them a resistance against this reality, which they will reject psychologically owing to the depth of values that they feel in the Islamic movement in their cultural, spiritual and practical consciousness.

(I) The decline of congregational prayer

Q34 – And (what about) the absence of congregational prayer except in certain times and on religious occasions?

A – This is part of the Islamic cultural, educational plan that those dealing with emigrants' issues should emphasize – that performing congregational prayer provides collective mobilization for spiritual worship that cannot be obtained from praying individually. They should work towards this spiritual mobilization by meeting for supplication, especially the Kumayl supplication on Thursday evenings, or on other evenings, to regain the spiritual traditions of congregational prayers, and by reciting the visits to the Infallibles (*ziyārah*) or by recreating the warm meetings that they enjoyed in their countries, to replicate the warm Eastern atmosphere.

The matter is how can we prepare all spiritual, social and cultural atmospheres that can produce, for each one of us and for our younger generation, an internal atmosphere to live in, as if we were living in the natural Islamic areas.

Chapter 4

An Opportunity for Islam

First: Schools

Second: Maintaining links with the homeland

Third: The emigrants' political and media roles

Fourth: Benefiting from the experiences of others

Fifth: Establishing pressure groups

Sixth: What should be taken and what should be left

Reverse emigration

First: Schools

Q1 – In the West, you use the slogan 'The School First'. What kind of school? Do you have a description?

A – Naturally, when I refer to 'the Islamic school', I mean the school that undertakes all kinds of knowledge, just like other schools operating where the expatriates live, but with the addition of the Islamic atmospheres and Islamic lessons. This is because I believe that it is unnatural to be satisfied with the Islamic lessons (alone) if we do not prepare for them (the pupils) an Islamic atmosphere by evoking Islamic memories in a certain way, or by exploring Islamic concepts even in arts subjects, or any subject into which Islamic concepts can be injected.

I believe that, in our places of expatriation, we have to work towards re-establishing Islamic cultural and spiritual atmospheres, so that the young experience the Islamic memory in their intellectual and spiritual consciousness and feelings, and are protected by this from being greatly affected by the deviant atmospheres around him.

Q2 – The 'school' may present a practical solution to the schools problem in the West. However, such school may be possible in the capital, where there are huge numbers of emigrant and expatriate children, but not in more distant areas. How might we achieve (establish) a school for just three or four families?

A – If it is not possible to create a school in a big and organized form, any small group should prepare a school for itself according to its abilities, one way or another, even if this means a school that operates only on Saturdays, Sundays or other holidays. This is to enable their children to live in certain Islamic environment, in

addition to the atmospheres of supplication, reciting the visits (*ziyarāt*) to the Infallibles and the leisure atmospheres that fathers and mothers should work to produce within the general atmospheres of the young generation.

Q3 – Our children suffer from an intellectual and psychological conflict in balancing the syllabus that harmonises with the reality of expatriate students and the one (syllabus) followed by Western schools. Do you have any thoughts about solving this problem or reducing its intensity?

A – I do not believe that there is any dangerous syllabus in Western schools, except what is within the environment of such schools regarding sexual freedom (to the point of breaking loose), whether in mixed swimming pools or parties or trips etc. Therefore, parents who do not have the means to establish their own schools must try to protect their children by encouraging thoughts which make them reject this atmosphere. Naturally, any mixing between the two sexes will have a negative effect on the morality of the younger generation, and the generation that has come to the West after experiencing the maximum of sexual impoverishment. Parents and Islamic society generally must study this matter and find some windows to serve as outlets for this sexual pressure, either by making marriage easier than it is in the East, or by temporary marriage, so that it has Islamic legality; for much of what is practised by some people there (in the lands of expatriation) has no legality, since the other party (person) does not mean the actual words she says in the contract.

Second: Maintaining links with the homeland

Q4 – In your Eminence's view, what are the ways through which emigrants living abroad can maintain links with their brothers in the homeland, on political, financial, media-related and other levels?

A – When we think in this regard, there may be some realistic and practical means that can open many doors in the financial area, when it comes to their brothers in the country that they emigrated from. I imagine that all tendencies can agree on this, although each one tries to help another. When the matter is related to people in general, such as if it was asked of every person to help his family or those around his family, such a call may find a good response from everyone. Therefore, this matter can be organized through a committee which everyone agrees on.

Regarding the political aspect, I imagine that everyone will agree on the main political problem that made them leave their country, whether it was a problem with the ruler, a general political line or for another reason. Thus, it is quite possible to agree on the common ground between everyone in this, but take note of one important point: that some specific political lines may create disputes between the different parties, but these can be frozen out or each party can be given the freedom to serve their specific cause without the opposition of the other.

We are, perhaps, speaking at a theoretical level. However, I believe that such matters can be dealt with one way or another and through greater awareness of the stage or reality in which we live. Naturally, it is quite possible that if they (the emigrants) emigrated to Europe, America or any Western country which offers media or political freedom, they might wish to benefit from this by planning a media

campaign, but should do so without violating the existing order or causing problems with the authorities of the country they reside in – especially the security regime within which the Western media operate – and without causing anxiety or fear of terrorism etc.

I believe that we can benefit now – if we are aware of our problems and our general ground on the political and media level – from the arenas of freedom in the West, on condition that we know how to deal with the atmospheres of freedom that exist in that country, without harming its security or harming each other.

Third: The emigrants' political and media roles

Q5 – In the media field, the following question may be asked: What can the refugee and emigrant group do in the satellite age in particular, and in the face of the distortion of Islam's image and our political issues. How can our small media stream stand up against this huge media tide?

A – I imagine that we have to move according to our capabilities, then work to strengthen these capabilities. For example, an important step as far as the media is concerned that we have to take in the lands of emigration is to make our people, who live in a foggy (unclear) atmosphere there, more aware. The people may hold an unclear idea of the ruler's problem, but what is the ruler's background? What are the issues that pushed all these large numbers of people, who have been driven out or emigrated, to leave their lands and families?

We have to give this culture to our generation that emigrated, as well as the other generations, so that this large human presence in the lands of expatriation becomes a robust voice in the media that can provide strength to the community. This is because the

problem of many is a lack of awareness about their causes, so when they meet with a journalist, or any person living with them in their lands of emigration, who wants to talk with them about their causes, they do not have logical arguments that can convince the others in this regard.

Also, we have to try to seize media opportunities, as in demonstrations on any occasion, even if only ten or hundred people take to the streets (with permission from the authorities there) so that the people ask about the purpose of this demonstration and the demands that it is making. The media in that country may find that this demonstration provides it with breaking news etc, for the media question cannot be pinpointed very precisely, or confined to certain limits – a certain channel, for instance – because it is quite likely that your simple, instinctive move may present a media opportunity for this or that group.

Then a third aspect, and this is to try to talk about our causes – whether related to Islam or to the political reality of Muslims in that country – to the people with whom we work in that country. It is quite likely that we can educate people among whom we live in this issue, and it is possible to ask them to support a protest, if we succeed in convincing them. If we managed to establish warm relations, some of those who become aware and supportive of our causes might send a short letter to a newspaper or protest to a (government) office or institution etc.

Fourth: Benefiting from the experiences of others

Q6 – How can an expatriate group benefit from the experiences of the foreign communities living in the lands of expatriation, both in the points of strength and the points of weakness?

A – I imagine that every community, especially the Islamic community, will have to move in two circles in the lands of expatriation:

The first circle: the circle that represents the group of this or that country in discussion about their own issues within their own zone. Let the Lebanese, for example, meet to discuss Lebanon's issues, and the Iraqis to discuss Iraq's issues. From here they can proceed to the wider second circle.

The second circle: the expatriate group should meet other communities with whom they have common ground: for instance, if we are Iraqi or Lebanese, we can meet with the Arab community from another Arab nationality, and then we can meet with the Islamic community in the wider zone -- Pakistanis, Iranians, Afghanis, Turks, Indians and other Muslims from this or that country – so as to interact with them in this wider circle with the same feeling of responsibility with which we try to move dynamically in our own national circle. In doing this, we shall be able to enhance this wide circle, whether it is Arab – and so enthuse about all our causes as we do about their causes, when the general issue is the one which brings us together in this circle, where the possibility of interaction is bigger – or Islamic. For the problem of many of those moving dynamically (in one region) is that they live so much in their narrow minority that they feel intense sensitivities towards other regions, even living in fear of being absorbed by another group. This what I have always advised many of our emigrant brothers in the West, whether Lebanese or Iraqi – I always say to them: you have to live in the private circle to discuss private issues and live in the general circle to discuss your issues and the issues of the others in a more general framework.

I believe that this can yield one kind of experience of interaction, and can make us proceed to the general horizon to open up in it to a lot of the backgrounds of the private horizons, for we cannot think about the Iraqi issue in isolation from the Arab issues. Likewise, we cannot think about the Arab issue in isolation from the Islamic issues, because there is a sort of interaction in the political, economic and security-related lines in the whole of the Arab World and Islamic World, and this is the area in which the arrogant forces controlling it dynamically move.

Therefore, you cannot understand the Iraqi issue, in all its lines, if you do not understand the lines that operate in the Arab issue, or the Islamic lines if you do not understand the Islamic issue in all its complexities and interactions with the international world. We notice that many people from whatever country make a great mistake when they concentrate only on their country through the interior details that have little bearing on the political, security and economic backgrounds that relate to a pan-national axis, geographical axis or Islamic axis etc.

Fifth: Establishing pressure groups

Q7 – Do you agree to the idea of establishing councils for the community to express their viewpoint and to contact the official agencies and the popular communities, or even on an individual level, and to win official recognition for its movement and causes?

A – I have called, and still call, on all the communities in the West to come together in a national unity, if they are moving dynamically in their homeland's circle, or in Arab causes if they are moving dynamically within the Arab situation, or in Islamic causes if they are moving dynamically within the Islamic circle, so

as to make their existence in this country an effective existence to the extent that they become a cause for the political groups active there.

If we obtain American or European nationality, this is a controversial matter as some think that this will isolate a person from his homeland. I imagine that if we get the nationality under the influence of any pressure or other reality, we could speak to a candidate for general or municipal (council) election to give him our vote in return for helping us, for instance in our daily affairs in our lands of emigration or in some political issues concerning our homeland or nation etc.

The example of the Jews in America and Europe, that made them into a force that could exert pressure in politics, the economy and the media, calls for a study, since they have chosen their positions in order to become needed by the people there. We find that there are no more than three hundred thousand Jews in Britain, for instance, according to some statistics that I have read. Nonetheless, when Britain's Foreign Secretary crossed some red lines in his visit to Palestine, the Jews boycotted him and he was forced to apologize to them. Even more, Britain's Prime Minister, (Tony) Blair, did not carry out some visits or trips in the Palestinian area for fear of the Jews who support the Zionist entity: they managed to influence him and prevent him from doing this, even though their number is not nearly as great as that of the American Jews, for example.

Therefore, I imagine that when we have the mentality of a nation, we will be able to enforce a lot of our points of view on the others (Westerners), for a man's motto should be: 'Become a need for the others, and the others will respect you.' So, we have to work to become a political, economic, security, media or scientific need

so that we can influence the others – as in the saying of Imam 'Ali (as): **'Do favour to whoever you like, and you become his master; but be in need of whoever you like, and you become his captive; dispense with whoever you like, and you become his equal.'** But our problem is that we think of these moral matters as unreachable, idealistic values and fail to bring them down to reality. If we could take our distinctive morals to the dynamic reality, we would gain a great profit at the level of man's reality.

Sixth: What should be taken and what should be left

Q8 – There is a call to our children in the lands of emigration to learn what they should take and what they should leave; are there any general guidelines that explain the principles of taking and leaving?

A – Naturally, when we talk about knowledge and specialization, they (the emigrant children) should study what are the needs which the nations need when they come back after acquiring these sciences and knowledge, since their nation may need some sciences and knowledge that are related to its growth and scientific and intellectual development. The problem is that some people may move in the world of specialization in areas which they will have no opportunity (to implement) in their Islamic societies, because the fields or the nature of the era do not allow it. So, they will be forced to stay in the West and the other countries will benefit from them, and their own nations will not benefit from their capabilities, talents and innovations.

We do not object to adding our scientific efforts to those of the others when we have advanced specializations, or to serve the

causes of humanity as a whole – there is no problem about placing these specializations in the service of some experiments or departments that produce a certain medicine or discover a certain disease or respond to a certain humanistic need. We do not object to this, but we say that in the face of our poverty in a lot of specializations and needs that we experience, and with the pressures of the arrogant forces which oppose us in proceeding with our cultural and scientific needs, we have to satisfy these needs and shortcomings in our world so that we achieve our own independence in scientific matters, as in economic matters, and can free ourselves from the pressures of the West.

On the scientific side, they will have to do their best to choose the sciences that their nation needs when they return home, and to be innovative (excel) in that, for I believe that we have to attain the highest degrees of specializations wherever possible, since this is a strength for Islam and Muslims. This is because the struggle we endure against Zionism and international arrogance is a scientific struggle more than an armed struggle. Even in battles using weapons, we need scientific expertise, owing to the nature of the precision technology that controls the world of weaponry, military planning etc.

Q9 – Groups, slogans, banners and activity centres are diverse and on the increase. You call for integration, so could you explain to us the nature of integration, especially given that what we see sometimes, in some areas, is fragmentation and fighting?

A – I imagine that no one among us can own the whole arena, the whole world or the whole of experience. Therefore, no one among us, whatever his knowledge and experience, can cover the whole

arena or to make good all the shortcomings of the arena. The integration question proceeds from the diversity of capabilities and expertise that society needs, as some of them represent a condition for the action of the other, or act as a positive point for the other. Therefore, I say that if we live the message of Islam in our message, it is natural that we all proceed to the arena, with each one of us putting his effort with the effort of the other, and each one becoming acquainted with the other and living with him, so that all can produce a better advancement and more comprehensive results.

Reverse emigration

Q10 – There is a reverse emigration, albeit limited, i.e. the return of some refugees and emigrants to Arab or Islamic lands to salvage what is left, or, having an early sense of danger, to escape from deviation for fear that things will get worse. What is your appraisal of such emigration?

A – I believe that the person who experiences a danger to himself or his family in these arenas must carry out a reverse emigration, so as to preserve what is left of his religion or that of his family, and to work to develop it once again. I also imagine that this represents a big opportunity for his rescue. However, he must choose country where he can exercise his freedom to preserve his religion, strength and dignity, and does not have to suffer the problem which forced him to emigrate from his country (in the first place).

Chapter 5

The Conveyors' Issues

The concept of the conveyor

The conveyors' tools

The peculiarity of the political conveyor

Replicating past experiences

Transferring social ills

The conveyors' crisis

Approaching non-Muslims

The Husainiyy pulpit

The concept of the conveyor

Q1 – Does the concept of the expatriate conveyor (*al-muballigh*) refer to the representative of a Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*) or to all the activists calling to Allāh the Most High?

A – Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil) is a necessity of the message-bearing movements within message-bearing societies, whether in Muslim lands or non-Muslim lands, for this is the way to keep Muslims focused on their religion and to prevent them being forced to abandon their religion out of fear of persecution by different means or in different societies. Therefore, I believe that everyone who sees himself capable of going to places of expatriation, to fulfil his message-bearing role in protecting expatriates from every deviation, or from deviation in their belief or Islamic adherence, should go there. Naturally, the conveyor should posses a talent for conveying.

A 'conveyor' is not (necessarily) a religious scholar who has an official religious position, but anyone who possesses the religious knowledge with which he can guide people to the truth and to what will keep their feet firmly on the right path, so that he can surround them with the social and non-social atmospheres and restraints that prevent them from dissolving in the un-Islamic reality in which they live.

Q2 – Regarding the question of Islamic activists, some callers (*du'āt*) asked you about that, but your ruling was that they should not go (to places of expatriation)?

A – I was (then) speaking, about that matter, from the principle standpoint, fearing for them on the one hand, and the need of the Islamic reality here to some of them on the other.

The conveyors' tools

Q3 – What tools should the conveyor in the emigration arena or the expatriate caller have?

A – He should have Islamic belief, (competence in) jurisprudence and systematic knowledge, and the style that enables him to understand peoples' mentality, needs and circumstances. He should also be aware of the reality in which the people are living, and be faithful to Allāh the Most High in his work, and thus not seek, through this work, a certain position or personal gain. Thereby he can avoid the complexes that a lot of conveyors in the Islamic countries bear which make people whom we want to approach lose confidence in the conveying idea, in conveyors generally and perhaps even in the religion itself, since they regard some of those who deviate from the (straight) line as representatives of religion in all its issues.

The peculiarity of the political conveyor

Q4 – Regarding the peculiarity of the conveyor's political position, do you see that this sometimes represents an obstacle to conveying, especially within atmospheres of rejection and sensitivities instigated by some Islamists who are active in the political field?

A – The matter is not that the conveyor has a political peculiarity, since it is natural that every conveyor, whether a religious scholar or not, should have a certain political affiliation, but he should not use his political affiliation in the dynamic movement of his conveying, or allow himself to be dominated by partisanship to what he is affiliated, and (thus) bring forward some people and push back others. This harms the supreme Islamic interest, through some private partisanships to this or that affiliation. The

problem is not a question of him being a party member in a way which makes him part of a group, but that his partisanship makes him move in a single circuit within a certain group without opening up to the whole Islamic reality.

Naturally, the person who does not make the people feel that he represents a particular cause which raises controversy amongst them, irrespective of whether this cause is right or not, is better than one who has a particular cause and behaves according to it. This is because the general character that people believe he has may help him to reach his message-bearing goal, to open up to them and to gain their confidence.

Replicating past experiences

Q5 – Some conveyors copy past experience from the arena in which they were active before they moved to the expatriation arena.

A – This is incorrect, for every arena has its own circumstances, time-wise and place-wise, and every society has its own mentality and psychological and intellectual conditions. Therefore, the arena in which he had the experience perhaps had some elements and peculiarities that are different from those of the new arena, especially if we recognize that people in the East are different from the people in the West, and that the negative influences that might leave their effects on the person in the line of deviation in the Islamic areas are different to the same influences in the non-Islamic areas. Also, the Islamic atmospheres which the conveyor experiences in the Islamic arenas may provide him with a resistance which he will not have in the non-Islamic arenas. Therefore, I believe that the conveyor or the caller should live a

dynamically moving state of emergency, according to the different circumstances of time, place, people and influences.

Transferring social ills

Q6 – Some conveyors transfer the ills of the old area to their new arena, creating a state of confusion and distortion, by attacking this or that Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*), or this or that movement.

A – I think that it is forbidden (*harām*) for such a conveyor to go there, and if he is (already) there, he is not allowed to undertake this mission since he will intensify people's deviation through tiring their minds and hearts with the doubts, distrust, hatred, spite and enmity that he inspires in them; they will end up feeling the need to be cautious of everything about the religion, the appearance of which is affected by such persons. I imagine that the negative points which expatriate societies experience through the partisanships that these (conveyors) instigate, whether partisanship in favour of the Authorities or political parties or whatever, exceed the positive points they bring.

The conveyors' crisis

Q7 – From the position of the Grand Islamic Jurist that you represent, what are the steps that you have taken regarding the crisis of conveyors in places of expatriation, and what future steps will be taken in this field?

A – I have tried to find some aware conveyors, who have knowledge of jurisprudence to match their good religious adherence, and I sent them to some places, and retained others who were (already) there. My guidelines to them were to bring the people together and not to separate them, make people love each other and to avoid Authority-type partisanship, since for decades

we have not proceeded in our Islamic activities to link the people to us personally, but to link them to Islam. There is no difference, in the dynamic movement of the Muslim's obedience to Allāh, in following this or that Islamic Jurist (*mujtahid*), for the path to Allāh is one, whatever the different rulings here or there, for they do not change a thing in the realistic truth. And if the matter is one of awareness and opening up, then it is not a traditional one that people differ in whom they follow. This is because the matter is Islam in one's awareness, on the levels of intellectual and the dynamic movement.

Approaching non-Muslims

Q8 – There is another arena in which the conveyor moves: the arena of the non-Muslims of the country in which he is refugee. What about this arena?

A – I have tried, in my speeches and relationships with those who live in the West or in Africa (to encourage them) to undertake calling the others to Islam, by means of introducing them to the Islamic truths and lines to make them understand Islam in a civilized way that is open to Islam's causes and needs. I believe that the call to Islam is amongst the things which have large arenas and a big potential for positive results. But the problem is that we, in our religious institutions (*hawzāt*), have not planned for this.

I try, with all means, to raise this issue with a lot of students who study in the religious institutions and to encourage conveying and calling activities amongst the idol-worshippers and non-Muslims, whether in Africa, America, Europe, Australia or Brazil, so that we may strive to produce an Islamic society through our presence in

these places. Some small experiments have started, but they need a great deal of work, effort and (financial) capabilities.

The Ḥusaīniyy pulpit

Q9 – Ḥusaīniyy preaching in the West, as well as in the other arenas, suffers from repetition and the non-selective transfer of the tradition, while those addressed are the educated Muslim youth who have been brought up under circumstances that are different to those in the East. How can we extrapolate from the experiences and significance of the Ḥusaīniyy revolution in light of the reality of emigrants in the West?

A – I imagine – and I don't know to what extent this view can move dynamically in reality – that intellectuals should memorize some poems that conform with the line of awareness, including dialect poems, especially the mature ones. Also, they should work to formulate Ḥusaīniyy history in a way that can inspire enthusiasm.

Therefore, my call to intellectuals is to proceed and transform the traditional form into a modern form in content. Also, we have to work on the basis that the sermon-giver (*al-khatīb*) is not everything, but (he) should be preceded by lectures given by aware intellectuals who speak about the Ḥusaīniyy issue in a way that the sermon giver might not be able to do – a way which takes into consideration that arena and culture and in a style that the people understand and which chimes with their lives.

If the intellectuals proceed in this direction, we might be able to dispense with a lot of those who do not have even the knowledge of Ḥusaīniyy history, and produce a (new) generation of Ḥusaīniyy sermon-givers, who are aware of the pulpit's responsibilities and mission.

Q10 – There is a big group of people who want to make the Ḥusaīniyy issue a mere historical event, and do not want to reflect it in our reality. Yazīd finished in his era and there is no other Yazīd, but how numerous are the Yazīds now!

A – When we read the *ḥadīth* narrated from Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as): **'Bring to life (call the people to) our cause; may Allāh bestow mercy to whoever brings to life (calls the people to) our cause'**, we find that this word summarizes all that can be presented in the arena of Ḥusaīniyy pulpit, for it provides a wide horizon that you can move in, for 'their cause' is not limited by time, since *Ahlul Bayt* (as) did not have anything except Islam – all their lives were about it and for it, and they even were martyred for it.

Therefore, we have to bring the people out of this traditional prison in which they have incarcerated themselves on the basis that the Ḥusaīniyy issue is one that happened in the year 61H. Instead, we have to clarify that it proceeded from its Islamic roots, in all the dynamic movement of the Prophets (as), and happened to stretch this movement in the direction of the future. We may understand this from the Wārith visit when we address al-Ḥusaīn (as) as the *wārith* (inheritor) of all the Prophets (as), so we understand that he proceeded from all the history which he inherited, then stood up to combine all the elements that exist in the history of the Messages. This is why we say to him: **'I bear witness that you have performed the prayer, and have given the religious tax (*zakāt*), and have enjoined what is right and forbidden what is wrong (evil), and that you have worshipped Allāh faithfully until you achieved absolute belief'** i.e., we say

to him: 'You combine all the fundamental junctions in the relations of the message-bearing person with Allāh and people, and in the struggle against evil, and in being faithful to Allāh the Most High in every activity.'

In light of this, we have to open peoples' minds to the line of awareness so that they are able to request the sermon-giver to go beyond the historical event to the present and future, instead of imprisoning it in the cell of the past.

Q11 – How can the Ḥusaīniyy rituals present a civilized image of Islam that we can show to the non-Shi'ite and non-Muslims?

A – That 'Āshūrā' is Islamic! There is no Ḥusaīniyy idiosyncrasy that stands outside the Islamic circle: al-Ḥusaīn (as) was, in his totality, (a complete representation of) Islam, in all his movement, sermons, fighting and struggle. If we examine the words which the Imam (as) said, we find that they are Islamic words in the general Islamic horizon, and not sectarian words from a narrow circle. When you read: **'O men! Verily the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) has said: "Anyone who sees an unjust ruler who permits those things which have been forbidden by Allāh, who disregards his duty, who opposes the way of the Messenger of Allāh, and acts amongst the servants of Allāh sinfully and aggressively, and that person does not do anything, in action or speech, to change the situation, then Allāh shall certainly place him along with the tyrant ruler (on the Day of Judgement)... Verily, these people have abided by the obedience of Satan and abandoned the obedience of the Merciful, and have made the forbidden of Allāh allowable and His allowable forbidden, and kept the income (from war and other sources) to themselves, and stopped carrying out Islamic punishments; and I am more**

obliged than anyone else to change (the situation)'", you see that al-Ḥusaīn (as) has proceeded from the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) to move dynamically in the line of reality.

And when we read his words: **'I have not risen (against Yazīd) disrespectfully, or recklessly (without a reason), or to do injustice, or to do corruption, but I have risen to seek to reform the nation of my grandfather. I wish to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong (evil)... So, whosoever accepts me in truth then Allāh is more worthy of the truth'**; or his words: **'Verily the illegitimate (person) (i.e. 'Ubaidullāh bin Ziād), son of the illegitimate (person) (i.e. Ziād bin Abīh), has given me only two choices: fighting or humiliation and subservience; humiliation and subservience is certainly far from us!'"**, we find that these Husaīniyy words are all Islamic.

It is up to us to acquire the capability to open up the awareness of other Muslims that Yazīd did not represent the Islamic line, that those who fought Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) did not represent this line whatsoever, and that the issue is not an issue of a Sunni party and Shi'ite party, but it is a question of staying on the straight path of Islam (as opposed to) deviating from the path of Islam, and that Yazīd does not have any sanctity.

We have to distance ourselves, as far as possible, from negative issues that may harm Muslim unity, as we find in some experiences. We will never benefit from this since these issues, when they develop in an emotional, agitated way, push the others (non-Shi'ites) away from us and make them hate these gatherings, and so we lose a big audience and big opportunities to guide the people and present *Ahlul Bayt* (as) in the way which can enter into the depth of their consciousness, hearts and minds.

Chapter 6

Emigration Studies

The emigration phenomenon in the contemporary Islamic reality

Muslim emigration to the West and Islam's standpoint towards it

The Muslim family in Western society: confronting the challenges

Youth and the West: between original values
and contemporary values

The emigration phenomenon in the contemporary Islamic reality

(Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh, al-Fikr al-Jadīd *magazine, London, p. 6-12, issues 11, 12, 1416H/1996.)*

Does emigration to non-Muslim countries represent a negative issue for Muslims generally, from the Islamic moral point of view, conceptually?

Does Islam want Muslims to shrink back inside their own countries to preserve the original nature of their concepts, the firmness in their belief and the correctness of their conduct? Thus [by extension] not allowing them to emigrate to infidel lands would preserve them from deviation and going astray; hence is the movement in Islamic reality to be found only in the interior, not in the exterior?

* * *

We must study the Islamic text that deals with the emigration question; we read the saying of the Most High: **'And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance; and he that leaves his dwelling and emigrates in the way of Allāh and His Messenger and is then overtaken by death, shall be rewarded by Allāh; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.'** 4:100

The Qur'ān presents the concept of 'emigration in the way of God', which places the matter in the circle of the Islamic plan for confronting the challenge. This is on the basis that emigration may provide a person with a lot of positive opportunities in the fields of knowledge to free him from the cruel pressures of the infidel and arrogant forces that overwhelm the Muslim, leading him astray from the way of God – in intellectual or behavioural ways – and separate him from the right path, or make him succumb to the will that

pressurizes him, so that it crushes the will of the Muslim to counter its influence in any vital matter that relates to the vital causes.

This is what we can conclude from the verse that precedes this verse when talking about the oppressed people who fall under the influence of the intellectual pressure of the arrogant infidel forces, through the very real compulsion to succumb to their will. This is His saying: **'The angels will ask those whom they carry off while steeped in sin: "What were you doing?" We were oppressed in the land, they will reply; they will say: "Was not the earth of Allāh spacious enough for you to emigrate?" Hell shall be their home – a bad fate. Except those who are (really) weak and oppressed – men, women and children, who have no means in their power, nor (a guide) to direct their way.'** 4:97,98.

We note that in both verses these oppressed people, who submitted to the deviant influences on their belief that were imposed on them by strong infidels, saw that their weakness as justification for submitting to the infidel pressure, because they did not have the force to challenge and oppose owing to an imbalance of power between them and the others. However, the verse said to them that the matter is not a closed tunnel in which they had no chance of alleviating the pressure, because if they had no strength in their positions at home there was more than one emigration opportunity to escape the pressure, and hence to find more than one chance to acquire new strength to confront the situation with firmness and to face the arena of challenge from a new position.

Therefore, the weak person who has an opportunity to reach to positions of strength has no (Islamic) legal justification to succumb to arrogant, infidel pressures. This puts him in the position of confronting the negative consequences before God the Most High and his responsibilities towards Him.

Being freed from pressure

Emigration, thus, represents a positive move of being freed from pressure, through which a man acquires strength and wider space to achieve his goals in life. If death meets him whilst he is on that path and away from his homeland, God will certainly reward him with His generosity and mercy. And if we study the emigration verses, we find that they represent the supreme value of the Qur'ānic appraisal of the emigrants (*al-Muhajirūn*) in its (emigration's) effect to emphasize Islam's position of strength and its dynamic movement in enriching the confrontation tendency. We have noticed in the Prophetic history (*sīrah*) how the Prophet Muḥammad (sawa) planned the Muslims' emigration to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) to escape the pressure and to prepare a favourable environment for the Message. We can, perhaps, understand from the emigration rulings how they move dynamically in the framework of achieving the great goal, in the line of propagation and movement and emphasizing the stance of the truth, by finding a wide arena for Islam through the intellectual and practical initiatives that Muslims in this or that area undertake in order to take the word of God to the hearts of other people who do not have the opportunity to hear it, or to deepen it in the minds of the Muslims who have emigrated – to make a living, or to escape pressure, or in pursuit of knowledge, or otherwise – on the basis of their need for Islamic care, spiritual fulfilment and dynamic development.

Strengthening positions in respect of the call (Message)

That arena might become a springboard for strengthening positions in respect of the Islamic call in terms of both belief and jurisprudence culture, or within the political horizons for the vital issues, to bring awareness to international public opinion about them, and also to defend them against the opposing media, which strive to

distort their image and denigrate their positions in the international arena. The dynamic movement of the call (to Islam) in local areas through direct dialogue, differs from its movement from a distance, since direct relations have numerous positive elements which can clarify a lot of the unclear situations that are imposed by the complexities of regional or international conditions. We do not talk in this matter on the basis of intellectual and political naivety and hence claim that the Islamic initiatives abroad, especially in the West, will lead to decisive results in the interest of the Islamic concepts and issues, and will bring about change quickly, for this is not realistic in a society in which the intellectual, political, religious, social basis has proceeded from concepts foreign to Islam in its cultural roots and practical jurisprudence considerations, something which makes getting through to it extremely difficult. This is especially so when we see how the image of Islam has become distorted due to different complexities in the Islamic World, and especially the political behaviour and bloody conduct of some of the positions in the Islamic movement, whose negative effects the media of the arrogant forces have tried to blow out of proportion and to distort in their detail, to a level that implies a (universal) aggressiveness or inhumane nature (in all Islam). This is in addition to the other image of traditional Islam as stagnant or backward societies that have diverged from the original Islamic lines and allowed themselves to fall under the control of the international arrogant forces, and live in a state of confusion – all of which removes all brightness from the image of Islam, as well as the respect of others.

The opening up of Islamic speech

This is in addition to the variety of styles and content in Islamic speech content resulting from the different tendencies and the different personalities in its cultures, that moves between: imitation

based on ideas with deep historical roots; opening up, which coincides with an understanding of contemporary values; the dual tendency, that stands in puzzled hesitation between tradition, with all its weight, and contemporary values, with all their lack of clarity. This has led to a kind of lack of clarity in the Muslim's consciousness, and the Arab's consciousness in turn. We are not talking about quick results, but that the dynamically moving, planned experience – through planning the endeavour in the call (to Islam), the style of presentation and the details of culture, politics and sociology – can start the first step in the one-thousand-mile journey. This can be achieved through the opening up of the pioneering, aware, intellectual Islamic segment of society to Western popular reality, or cultural medium, in a process that combines the powers, the efforts to spread Islam in the real world and the stimulation to achieve the goals; for Muslim activists should not keep to themselves in their individual affairs, because the effect of this is that all their concerns become a question of just reliving their problems and their partisan, regional, sectarian or national disputes, with the result that everyone ends up standing in his own secluded circle – neither achieving his aim, nor giving any service to the supreme issues.

Islamic unity

A pressing matter on our contemporary Islamic stage is the need to establish a practical process in countries of expatriation in which the Islamic character of the individual or the group is transformed into an active element that protects personality and preserves originality. This can be achieved by working towards establishing a miniature form of an Islamic political front within the framework of the different Islamic parties, and an actual experience of Islamic unity at the level of sectarian jurisprudence, philosophy or political dynamics, so as to study the intellectual and practical problems that can impose

themselves on the Islamic reality in this or that circle. This can also be achieved by trying to freeze small details in the peculiarities of this or that party, this or that institute or this or that regional group, to move away from operating within small islands that have no horizon in atmospheres of the supreme challenges which confront the whole of Islam in the question of its image, and all of the Muslims in their causes. And if there are peculiarities for a given group in its homeland or region, the activation of these peculiarities at the level of the public cause – so that the public interest serves the peculiarity, or the peculiarity moves through the public interests which surrounds its circumstances – is the best way to achieve great results, for this is what brings everyone together, away from overindulgence in the peculiarities that partition one homeland from another and one area from another. Each group will, thus, not feel that its country's issues consume all of its concern, since the other country's issues do not represent a priority as the other group is (also) looking after its own priorities. In this way others may succeed in fragmenting our causes, positions and stances, with the result that we do not feel that there is any arena that brings us together, or a unifying cause, except on a marginal level here or there. This is on the one hand.

On the other, it is unrealistic to talk about an Arabic issue that is separated from another Arabic issue, or an Islamic issue that is separated from another Islamic issue, for the arrogant international political reality proceeds from the interests of the arrogant world against the world that is oppressed (deemed weak), especially in its positions that exploit natural resources, strategic positions, consumer markets etc, which represent the depth of its interests that are achieved on out account. Through this, it (the arrogant world) stirs up all the contradictions in our nation, in its sectarian, regional, partisan and national partisanships, and transforms them into

disputes, conflicts and wars that use up all our energies and resources and bring low all our causes; we (then) appoint these arrogant powers as judges after they have been – as they are still – opponents, looking to them for solutions, when their position through their activities was in fact the problem; in this way the future is lost in the maze of roads of the present.

We have noticed the negative results of this bad reality in the outcome of the first Gulf War, when some Arabs and Muslims proceeded to make the issue of the relationship between the Arabs and some Muslims on one side with Iran on the other into a conflict of existence, whilst the relationship between them and Israel did not represent any problem for the people of the Gulf, but rather the greatest problem (for them) was the Arabs, especially the Palestinians. Also, America is regarded as the saviour, whereas it was America that prepared all the plans and circumstances for the war. Moreover, we find that some Arab situations are regarded as the problem, as we notice in many partisan, sectarian or regional position, when the overindulgence in peculiarities proceeds to place this or that Islamic group as an enemy inside the Islamic nation, whilst the arrogant infidel enemy becomes a friend, ally or similar. All this is because of the absence from our minds of the greatest danger and going too far in dealing with isolated smaller dangers.

Political flexibility

We want to raise, in the awareness of Muslims in the West, a realistic cultural movement to understand the background to the arrogant reality in its stance towards our reality. This is because the arena there (among the arrogant) may be more suitable for understanding the foundations of the stance of the arrogant who represent, in international politics, the decision-making powers, so that they (the Muslims) move, through this political observation, towards a deep

and realistic study that uncovers all plans, methods and decisions which operate within the arrogant attack on our supreme causes. In this way, we can acquire wider knowledge that enables us to reduce its (the attack's) dangers through a confrontation that has a counter-plan and clear view; also, we can get rid of the political and cultural naivety in our arenas that are under pressure and which lead us to give concessions in our principles, terminology, means and goals under the banner of political reality and flexibility. A concession regarding a terminology in the service of a non-Islamic terminology leads to a concession in an Islamic issue, with the end result of abandoning the Islamic cause for the national cause, making the issue a political issue that abandons all the culture, history and attitude behind it to take on a sectarian title that has no colour, taste or smell. Political flexibility means dynamic style within the framework of conflict, alliances and political balance. It does not mean abandoning original Islamic values in its political and intellectual content, or the original features that proceed from the roots.

Preserving the Islamic personality

Islamic groups in the West must shoulder the responsibility of preserving their Islamic personality in the framework of the individual as well as the family, and to work of integration to prepare practical means to achieve this goal, so that the concerns of each group are balanced with those of another. Also, they should open up to the reality there, at the level of calling to Islam, to open that arena's horizons to Islam in its bright, original image, to stand up to and face all problems and doubts cast over Islam at the levels of intellect, dynamic movement and reality, and to make the Islamic presence there a new Islamic arena for Islam to proceed to leave its stamp on the West, even in if only some circles.

Let there be a dynamic call to Islam, a society of awareness and propagation starting with presenting Islamic culture and behaviour in a way that manifests all its morals and concepts in our lives, so as to be role models for others when we succeed in manifesting these things as an Islam moving within us.

Confronting challenges

There are challenges we face in this difficult period of the Islamic reality in the world, when we find that in every Islamic area there is a battle against the arrogant forces, in every Muslim country there is a problem for Muslims in their internal situations, in all the reality of the arrogant movement in the world there is an attack on all the Muslims in their culture, politics, situations and resources, and we notice the new political reality that places the peace issue with Israel in detriment to the whole of the Arab and Islamic reality, when international pressure proceeds to impose on Arabs humiliating concessions that place them off the stage, so that Israel becomes the active force in the region.

We must deal with this matter like other matters in which we face challenges – through our Islamic perspective that does not yield any Islamic position in deference to a non-Islamic position, or any Islamic stance in a vital and sensitive Islamic matter in deference to another non-Islamic matter. We must acquire an all-embracing view of the whole of the Islamic reality and the Islamic base.

In this difficult period – a period of supreme challenges and the muddling of issues and muddling of concepts – (we must strive) to freeze out all our minor disputes so that we can proceed to an Islamic unity that searches for a position of strength here and a big goal there, and so that Islam becomes the foundation of our unity, with which if we want to cooperate around it from a non-Islamic

position then we do so from a unified position: the cooperation of the strong with the strong.

We are responsible before Allāh for the whole of Islam in this era. We are responsible for all Muslims before Allāh; we must not fragment or be marginalized, but open up to Allāh the Most High to proceed with the whole of Islam to confront the whole of infidelity, and from the whole of justice to confront the whole of injustice.

Let's proceed in the line of international justice against international injustice: **'We wished to be gracious to those who were oppressed in the land and to make them leaders (in faith), and to make them heirs. And to give them power in the land; and to show Pharoah, Hāmān, and their warriors, that at their (the oppressed) hands were the very things against which they were taking precautions.'** 28:5,6.

Muslim emigration to the West and Islam's standpoint towards it

(His Eminence's speech, which was read in the fourth annual conference of the Islamic Cultural Institute, Dearborn, 1-5 Rajab 1413H / 25-29 December 1992.)

The problem which a Muslim faces in himself and his family, in his private and public life, in the West, is one of the most complicated problems in his Islamic existence, in the nature of affiliation and in its details. The matter is not limited to some negative aspects that they face in the shortcomings of the social reality to which they have emigrated and lived in their present period, or the opposing conditions in individual and family habits and customs, the nature of freedom that governs people in their lives and the laws that contradict some Islamic obligations so that Muslims stand puzzled between religion and the law. The matter is, rather, in the whole of the environment which they breathe into their minds, hearts and feelings and extend, unconsciously, to the movement of their internal and external life, exactly like the air they breathe and the odour they smell in their body pores with all their negative and positive consequences.

Negative influences

While some people acquire resistance to negative influences, through their Islamic personality in thought and practice, they cannot protect themselves from the minute influences that get through to them to discreetly change their norms, and subtly change their view of life and of things around them. The result is that they become used to bad acts, even if these are (Islamically) forbidden, since they seem

normal to people, while Islamic good acts seem hard to accomplish, even if they are obligatory, and are rejected by people, creating an open arena for all probabilities. As for their children and their wives, it is difficult to protect them from all this because the effect of this environment on their morals, souls and conditions can deliver a knockout punch!

Thus the Islamic reservations concern emigrating to countries in which the religion weakens in both thought and practice, and regarding it as *at-ta'arrub ba'd al-hijrah* (the move from the land of Islam to the land of atheism) in terms of what the historic meaning of the word 'emigration' represents (a meaning that is related to the positive religious content proceeding from a firm belief in the faith circle, and from a strong religious adherence to the practice circle), and what the historic meaning of the word *ta'arrub* represents (a meaning that is related to the negative, deviant influence on religious thinking, faith and the practical religious adherence). This is in light of the fact that emigration used to provide the person with the culture and power to remain firmly on the right path, while the *a'rabiyyah* referred to the example that had neither knowledge nor religious adherence because he was living outside the environment in which elements of the adherent Islamic personality could be cultivated.

Islamic planning to protect the person

Islam plans to protect the person from infidelity and going astray exactly as it plans to protect him from sickness and death, for there is intellectual sickness – infidelity, and moral sickness – and hypocrisy, and these must lead to spiritual death which is the wrath of Allāh and His punishment. This is why the Holy Qur'ān warned people, in its verses, from all this in light of the negative consequences of taking

that route, and so there is no excuse for a man to take a materialistic opportunity if it is to lead to loss of a spiritual opportunity. This what has placed the crime of abandoning Islam (*irtidād*) on the level of supreme treason, and what requires the person, into whose mind doubts in faith have crept to work towards serious thinking, continuous reading and dialogue with those who have a level of knowledge that enables them to engage in objective dialogue based on strong reason and scientific proof, so that the doubt does not have a route to atheism and rebellion against Islam and Muslims.

It is narrated that the Prophet Muḥammad (sawa) said, in his guiding advice to 'Alī (as): 'There is no living outside the Islamic land after emigration.' And it is narrated that Imam ar-Riḍā (as) said, in his answers to questions: **'And Allāh prohibited *at-ta'arrub ba'dal hijrah* (for fear of) abandoning the religion and abandoning support for the Prophets and the Imams, and what this would entail in terms of corruption and the abolition of the rights of everyone due to the limited (knowledge and religious adherence) of the dweller in the Bedouin areas. Therefore, if a man has come to know all the religion, it is not permitted for him to live among people of ignorance because it is not guaranteed that he would not depart from knowledge and join the people of ignorance (in their situation) and (even) go too far in this.'**

So, the matter originates from fear that the emigrating Muslim in the land of ignorance and infidelity will become merged in the general atmosphere that transforms his knowledge into ignorance and his religious adherence into deviation, with the result that he – due to the pressure of the reality – will compare his materialistic needs and belief needs and give preference to the former over the latter.

Opening up to meet our essential needs

However, the pressing question for us, Muslims, to answer is:

How shall we face our scientific, cultural and economic needs on which our growth and our intellectual, scientific and domestic advancement depend, if they are not available in the Muslim countries but available only in non-Muslim countries such as Western or non-Islamic Eastern countries, as is actually the case in this period of our life? The scientific and economic level attained by infidel countries has obliged the whole of the Islamic world to travel to them, and reside in them – even if only temporarily. How do we contend with the economic and security pressures under the influence of which many people fall due to disturbances, destructive wars and oppressive rule in Muslim countries, all of which may lead to difficulty in continuing to live there in an acceptable way with regard to livelihood and security?

Do we have to stick to our limited positions, not allowing development to open up to the Islamic reality and, hence, continue in a weak condition and in permanent need of the others, which will lead to defeat under the pressure of needing them and consequently submitting to their planning and the loss of the opportunity to enjoy the independence that is founded on self-sufficiency in the economic, scientific, cultural and military fields?

Can people die of starvation, if they are amongst those deemed weak who haven't got their daily food, nor the opportunity to lead a dignified life?

Can they fall under the influence of oppressive rule which imposes on them its infidelity, deviation, oppression and tyranny, and end up

going – as a result of that – in the direction of infidelity, deviation or imprisonment and death?

The answer to all these is that Islam does not accept weakness or stagnation in Muslims, nor that they fall under the influence of need, as it does not want them to die of starvation or in fear. Allāh wants Muslims to acquire the strength to become a strong nation that its enemies and Allāh's enemies fear, as in the verse: **'Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike fear into (the hearts of) the enemies of Allāh and your enemies.'** 8:60.

Islam rejected the argument of those deemed weak, who deviated from the line of truth through their submission to the strong arrogant forces who exploited their weakness to impose infidelity and deviation on them, as in the verse: **'The angels will ask those whom they carry off while steeped in sin: "What were you doing?" We were oppressed in the land, they will reply; they will say: "Was not the earth of Allāh spacious enough for you to emigrate?" Hell shall be their home – a bad fate. Except those who are (really) weak and oppressed – men, women and children, who have no means in their power, nor (a guide) to direct their way. For these, there is hope that Allāh will pardon them: for Allāh is Pardoning and Forgiving.'"** 4:97-99.

We notice that the Holy Qur'ān differentiated between those capable of freeing themselves from the arrogant pressure, by emigrating to the 'spacious' land of Allāh, to gain the strength that enables them to hold on to their religion and to take it back to their land from the newly-acquired position of strength with which they can expel the arrogant, and those who are incapable of doing, and so he does not accept an excuse from the former, but accepts it from the latter.

We continue with these verses to read the verse which emphasizes emigration as a general line, giving reward to the emigrant who dies during his journey: **'And whosoever emigrates in the way of Allāh, shall find numerous places of refuge in the land and great abundance; and he that leaves his dwelling and emigrates in the way of Allāh and His Messenger and is then overtaken by death, shall (certainly) be rewarded by Allāh; and Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.'** 4:100.

Emigration to acquire scientific, economic, political and security positions of strength is emigration in the way of Allāh and emigration to Allāh and His Messenger. However, this legislation categorizes the matter as a principle, but its application may differ according to the details.

Providing an Islamic environment

So what about the details?

The answer to that is precise planning to found an Islamic environment in places of emigration, by establishing centres, institutes, clubs, schools and mosques in which children can find an Islamic atmosphere for their schooling and their playing; the youth can find positions of dynamic movement, aspiration, culture and brothers; women can find a pure and clean environment in which to build their personalities, preserve their morals and open up spiritual or scientific windows; and old men can find their suitable atmospheres.

The Muslim community that emigrates to Western countries that are distant from Islam must work towards establishing an Islamic society that is open to Islamic ideas, spirituality and culture so as to preserve for the Muslims their Islam, and to create Islamic atmospheres for

the coming generation to help them to grow in an open, Islamic environment. This is the way to achieve balance between a non-Islamic reality and an Islamic society, and is the only way that justifies their staying in these countries from the Islamic legal point. Therefore, the matter reaches the Islamic obligatory level on all (Muslims) as a 'sufficiency' obligation (*wājib kifā'iyy*): if met by some (a sufficient number), the others are relieved from it, but if no one meets it everyone will have then committed a sin.

In addition, founding such an Islamic environment, through worship, cultural, educational and social institutions, may open the way for non-Muslims to embrace Islam when they encounter the positive aspects of Islamic ideas in their countries. Some may, with guidance, start to call to Islam, which might help in transforming most of the society or a large number of its people to Islam, as happened in many countries which Muslims opened to Islam through the call to Allāh by showing wisdom and exemplary courtesy, and by opening up to others with knowledge, gracious manners and good conduct.

A word of guidance

Finally, I would like to send my greetings to your Islamic conference, and to all members of the Islamic community, our sons, daughters, brothers and sisters, wishing for all (the power) to work with all strength to open up to the causes of the whole nation, to support Muslims with all possible means and by emphasizing adherence to Islam in yourselves and your families, for this gives happiness in this life and the Hereafter. And remember the saying of Allāh the Most High: **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones, under the charge of fierce and mighty angels who never disobey Allāh's command and who promptly do His bidding'** 66:6, and His saying: **'O believers**

fear Allāh, and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow; and fear Allāh, for Allāh is well-acquainted with of all that you do.' 59:18-20.

The place in which the person lives, in the homeland or in the land of emigration, in the lands of Islam or infidelity, does not specify for him his religious conduct. Rather, he should contribute to place through his conduct, opening up and religious adherence, something which will make others trust him, for the more a person adheres to his religion the greater other people's confidence in him shall be – and whosoever corrects what is between him and God will see God correcting what is between him and others.

The Muslim family in Western society: confronting the challenges

(Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusain Faḍlullāh, al-Fikr al-Jadīd *magazine, London, p. 6-12, issues 13, 14, 1417H/1996.)*

In Islamic legislation, the family occupies the position of the first social cell that of the human incubator, and is distinguished by the warm emotional element that draws the person to his spouse, children, father, mother and brothers. This becomes a means to build a humanistic personality on a foundation of spiritual kindness, which nurtures the person, filling his mind and heart with security, through the type of interaction that makes one spirit open to another. He should feel this emotional atmosphere overwhelming and surrounding him, in a humanistic way in which he experiences all its psychological, spiritual and intellectual details without any burden to his self or harm to his childhood, for it should make him breathe this (atmosphere) through his feelings as a matter of course, without it being imposed upon him.

Responsibility of care for the family

In light of this, the Islamic responsibility of care for the family proceeds from a foundation of intellectual and psychological planning, which achieves for its members the opening up to Islamic concepts as a way of thinking and feeling and as a way of life. Thus, the person will start his movement from an Islamic base, upon which stands his mental, emotional and dynamic building; this enables the Muslim who – from childhood – has to face an opposing reality with strength and firmness, to avoid becoming a feather in the wind or a piece of wood adrift in the current. This what pushes an Islamic generation into the public arena, in which beliefs, steps and tendencies differ, to take its position on a basis of balance that

protects it from all violent disturbances in an atmosphere of challenge.

The essential matter to address, as far as responsibility in the family is concerned, is the upbringing of the individual within it, and how to make him a person of God in his service to Him, his loyalty to Him and his relationship with Him through his belief, practice and feelings, through which he may experience the meaning of loving Allāh and fearing Him. In this way, he will find his opportunity to acquire His satisfaction, to enter His Holy arena and to avoid the places of His wrath and Fire.

This is what the gracious verse emphasizes: **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones, under the charge of fierce and mighty angels who never disobey Allāh's command and who promptly do His bidding.'** 66:6. We notice, in this verse, that Allāh the Most High stirs the emotional side so as to proceed in planning, to achieve the internal and external preventive measures that prevent one from falling into the great Fire that is cruel in its nature and in those who are put in charge of it. It is exactly as if the father, husband or mother, in this life, is in a position where the other person – wife or child – is in danger of burning in fire: He stirs the depths of anxiety to make them do something to rescue them from an inescapable fate.

On the other hand, we find the other verse: **'Gardens of Eden; they shall enter there, as well as the righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their offspring, and angels shall enter unto them from every gate. (With the salutation): "Peace unto you for all that you have steadfastly endured, now how excellent is the (your) final home."'** 13:23,24. This shows the familial atmosphere in Paradise, where the pious among fathers, wives and offspring meet once again in the place of God's satisfaction, because

of their piety – in this life – in belief and practice and the fact that they stayed on the right path in the line of Oneness of God and obedience to Him.

The Qur'ān presents these two pictures to people to stir resolve within them, and so they abandon the first picture for the second, reaching the happy ending that any person wants for himself and his family. This makes the matter one that concerns fate, and not a temporary situation that comes into his life every now and then.

In light of this, the matter requires collective effort, in addition to individual effort, so as to prepare the right atmospheres and conditions – which represent the environment in which the family can grow and achieve for its individuals the guarantee of self-defence against deviation and succumbing. This can be achieved through preparation of different means, such as schools, 'incubators' and various programmes that fill the soul with its needs in education, innocent leisure and spiritual development, all of which provide the individual with the necessary conditions for a normal life.

Responsibility for solidarity

The responsibility, perhaps, falls not only on families in their familial or local communities, but also on all those active in the Islamic field, the Islamic Grand Authorities, active movements and intellectual groups – thinkers, callers and conveyors, who move dynamically towards the integration of their endeavours to find the wise plan needed for an Islamic generation that is open to Islam and our era, making it an effective force in contemporary Islam's lift off towards the world. The issue is not one of those issues that relate to the individual side, that of fathers and mothers with their children – everyone in his own family – but, rather, it relates to the new Islamic generation, in its general aspirations, and its open arena, and in

dynamic struggle with the Islamic and intellectual challenges that it faces.

And if the responsibility is big and embraces the social reality inside the Islamic countries, it is even greater and stronger in infidel countries, when Muslims are forced to emigrate and reside in them. Here they may encounter a reality that does not represent a land in which they can put down roots, an environment which they cannot open up to, and a world in which they feel foreign – through its concepts, habits and traditions that are different to the ideas, habits and traditions which they have inherited.

The problem of the young generation

If adults have started (their life in places of emigration) with deep roots of Islamic affiliations, in thought and practice, the younger generation will not necessarily have inherited these elements, since what it possesses may represent nothing beyond some passing words and foggy concepts which do not touch their true depth – even if they have touched some of their behaviour. The danger may lie in the Western school in which Muslim children are educated, where they breathe in the atmospheres of the West in all its emotions, conditions and aspirations, as if they were something natural to move around in, exactly like the natural aspects of their fellow-pupils in play-grounds and classes. They may find it strange to hear the negative remarks of their fathers and mothers, as if these are outside the norm. They may confront the matter with increasing and unspoken rejection, which looks like a complex from the stance of the family. They will start to embody the bitter adolescent query: why do they prohibit us from dancing with our friends, or from swimming in mixed swimming pools, or from enjoying free and warm relationships etc?

The difficult problem, in this situation, is that the new young generation does not have a sufficiently deep or clear conception of its

personality to protect itself from the influences that move in the atmosphere into which it was thrown and the arena in which it was placed. What is its understanding of God, and His relationship with man, and man's position before Him? What is its understanding of personal freedom? What about morals in all of this?

Some teaching may get through with recognition, but some things may create contradictions within it, leaving it in a state of deep puzzlement between its past that it has learnt from the family and the new that it has learnt from the school or the surrounding environment. It may not be able to confront the situation in a balanced way that permits answers to its puzzling questions, with the result that it becomes shattered psychologically, if not consciously.

A suggestion for a remedial plan

With children who have been implanted in a land that is not their own, their growth will be separated from the natural elements that provide them with the natural process of growing. This makes it essential that the remedy comes within the framework of a thoughtful, realistic plan, along the following lines:

1- Proceeding from the narrated word of Imam 'Alī (as): **'Do not (try to) give your children your morals, for they have been created for a time other than yours,'** we may extrapolate from this by annexing the idea of a change in place to the change in time. This is justified, because the concept is not based on time in its absolute sense, but rather it means – in its intellectual implications – that dynamic morals are subject to different circumstances, for they may change according to their dynamic peculiarities, as we notice in the differences in morals regarding behaviour in social etiquette, in food and drink, dress, different ways of expression, social dynamics, patterns of leisure etc; place may have a role in the differences

between societies' habits and traditions, and time may have a role as well.

Therefore, we must study the reality in which children in the West live in order to make a comparison between the unchangeable morals which stretch across time and place – on the basis that they are man's morals as defined by his humanity, which represents truth that goes beyond time and place – and the changeable morals that are not related to the value but to circumstances, reality and the conditions surrounding a person. This enables us to observe the former and to plan to organize and guide their movement in the latter, for the problem is that fathers and mothers strive to make their children into an image (carbon copy) of themselves, without studying the circumstances that moulded their image in its intellectual and practical dimensions, nor with regard to the new circumstances that may impose another image through new dimensions.

In a lot of situations people, including religious Muslims, may confuse what is tradition with what is religious adherence, and the result is confusion regarding moral concepts, deriving from a lack of religious Islamic awareness of the original Islamic morals on intellectual basis, which opens up to the behavioural dynamics.

We are not calling for a moral and intellectual coup d'état, but for re-looking at moral lines, including Islamic lines regarding rulings (*fatāwā*) that prohibit Muslims from every leisure even if it is innocent, such as a ruling that prohibits clapping in a certain way, or any kind of leisure except what is proved to have been allowed. This has created the basis for the prohibition of leisure, with some as exceptions. This may make a person think that there is a mentality which regards joy, in its deep movement within the self, as not recommended Islamically, and that (according to this mentality) a

person must embody the sad feelings that link him with death, whilst he is in the heart of life!

When pointing to such a jurisprudence mentality in regarding man's behaviour, we do not want to talk in a negative way that rejects such an approach outright, for the matter must be subjected, in rejecting or accepting, to specialist research where the Islamic Jurists have differed in their results. Rather, we want to point out that some jurisprudence opinions, in allowing and forbidding, may be subject to environmental influences which this or that Islamic Jurist experienced, and these may be reflected in their understanding of the (sacred) text or the Islamic pillars in the minds of religious people, or not.

As we have said, we do not want to abandon the jurisprudence way simply because there is a new reality to which we must open up, or that there is an intellectual development which we must face, but we want to study the reality according to its Islamic legal categories, through an objective formulation of rulings (*ijtihād*) that is open to the general Qur'ānic lines regarding details in specific rulings, in both public and private lives.

2- It is essential to open modern scientific schools in which the new generation – in its initial stages of education – breathe Islam's spiritual, moral and social atmospheres. This will contribute greatly in protecting young Muslims from elements of spiritual and moral deviation and intense psychological complexities. We might perhaps emphasize that the school project in the West is more important than the mosque or *Ḥusainiyyah*, not the opposite. And perhaps executing this project is what can make it allowable for Muslims to stay in these countries, since negative results reflected in the new generation from the Islamic point of view may lead to making emigration out of these

countries obligatory, for it is not allowed to stay in countries where a person's, or his family's, religion may weaken.

3- Opening sports, social and youth clubs for the young Muslim generation (is important), so that they find a natural release from the psychological suffocation and daily tiredness that come from school or practical obligations. Also, starting dialogue forums for the Muslim youth (is useful), in a style through which we can discover their ideas, learn their views about the vital elements in belief and behaviour, and to see the new concepts and feelings that they have acquired – all this to try to open up to this generation from within, to correct what has become corrupt and straighten out what has become deviant, in a way in which they do not feel the psychological pressure that may can create opposite reaction, especially if accompanied by physical pressure.

4- (It is also important to) prepare worship atmospheres that are open to the dynamic elements in religious and spiritual matters, and to abandon boring routines in the practice of worship, in order to encourage the desire in the young to go to these places and partake in the spirituality of prayer and the dynamics of supplication.

5- (It is also important to) prepare religious social atmospheres by stirring Islamic memories, and trying to refresh their styles and methods with what fits in with the different mentalities of youth. This is to make them (the youth) open up to these memories on a level in which they feel strong and in close relationship with the historic personalities involved and the events in question, and through planning, to provide a bright picture which makes them store, within their consciousness, its spiritual features, moral elements and secrets about humanistic greatness.

We are (currently) raising some general ideas with regard to initiating some experiments that are appropriate to the new reality,

so that more ideas may be forthcoming and a lot more experiments are engaged in, and so that a comparative study may, in the end, achieve the integration needed to deal with this difficult problem.

We believe that the responsibility of staying in the West imposes on us the responsibility of preparing all means to preserve our Islamic identity, original moral values and Islamic adherence, so that we do not lose ourselves under the influence of deviant atmosphere, and do not lose our children through an un-Islamic upbringing.

Perhaps we cannot reach perfection in what is required; we have to accept this and use it to encourage experiments in the process of cooperation and integration, until we arrive at the better reality.

The Muslim family in the West, as in any infidel country, is living with one of the most difficult problems, and our greatest responsibility is to work towards finding suitable solutions, especially since our great ambition is to proceed with the Islamic Message to guide the world to Islam. Therefore, we must not lose ourselves and our families whilst trying to bring benefit to others!

Youth and the West: between original values and contemporary values

(Lecture by his Eminence, given on his behalf at the thirty-first conference of the Muslim Youth Forum, London, December 1996, and published in al-Fikr al-Jadīd, *issues 15, 16, p. 6-14, 1417H/1997.)*

Criticism of contemporary Islamic speech

The value of contemporary Islamic speech, especially for Islamic activists, is in Islam's ability to face man's different problems in a realistic way that does not get lost in abstractness. We study the Holy Qur'ān and find that Allāh the Most High, Who is so elevated that nothing is above Him, has come down to His creation so that nothing is below Him, and talked to them through His signs which are spread across the Universe, and through His bounties that are evident in the details of their lives, so that they can open up to the unknown as witnesses, and open up to the Creator through His creations.

Our belief in the unknown does not mean distancing ourselves from the reality around us; rather it strengthens and emphasizes it, and implies that it is not moving in vacuum, and (so) we should not fall in atmospheres of worry, puzzlement and emptiness when we face difficulties, cruel pressures, complicated problems and deep labyrinths, because we feel Allāh's discreet support, mercy, care for our lives, and supervision from the Lord's position on high, which nurture man for all his life – in body and spirit – without removing his will and choice and practical responsibilities for building his self.

Thus, we want Islamists to fill Islamic speech with Allāh, with the intellect's spirituality and the dynamic movement's reality. This is on the basis that Allāh had – in His book –watched over the first Islamic movement in Prophet Muḥammad's mission: the verses observed the

reality, and judged it, to provide – in the end – the revelation of the Islamic Message, in the Muslims' peace and war, whether in success or failure, and to discover the truthful people and the liars, and to guide the mission into the future with brave admission of error, if it erred, and heroism in changing the course, if it deviated.

The value of the Qur'ān – the dynamic Divine Book – is that it proceeds in its style to deal with a reality that is mixed with the unknown; the reality does not become unrealistic when it merges with the unknown, neither does the unknown leave its world of the consciousness when it touches realistic issues. This is because (Qur'ānic) speech is for man, who is alive in his bodily existence and unknown in his spiritual secrets and metaphysical aspirations.

Therefore, we must keep our Islamic speech subject to its peculiarities and its own elements when dealing with the human soul in the dynamics of reality. It should not be abstract, flying with the imagination, neither sensual, sinking into a materialistic world, but it should take one part from the former to bring abstractness to reality, and one part from the latter to make reality open up to the unknown.

I want to point out this vital point because I have seen that there are two extreme tendencies in Islamic speech: an abstract tendency towards the unknown that pushes you to live in a world that is wholly unknown, and so you do not sense your existence on earth, and a materialist tendency that pursues reality on earth and indulges in the affairs of the earth to the point of forgetting God and His Divine secrets that provide man with some unknown element in his movement in life through an unknown supply that watches over his movement, straightens his course and fills his spirit with confidence and hope.

We must recognize that Islam is a religion that desires its vital features and intellectual roots from a belief in God, His Messengers

and the Day of Judgement, and (a belief) in the world of the unknown regarding belief and in the world of witnessing in regard to dynamic movement and life. Thus, Islamic speech must combine all of this so that we live our Islam in a way that is balanced in its elements and dynamic in its dimensions and aspirations.

Why 'the youth and the West'?

This issue concerns one of the most sensitive ones, most real and most future-threatening questions. This is because it relates to the (current) youth, who represent the leading (element in) humanity, who have started their growth in life to become the basis of pioneering, leadership and production in the future, succeeding to the generations of their fathers and forefathers who endured their negative experiences in their past movement, which leans with all its weight on the present, and has its effect on developing the future.

It may be unrealistic to think that the youth can be subjected to ready moulds, produced by the generation amongst which it lives now or the one before that. This (past generation) will close its mind to new things in life, close its spirit to the development of reality and close its dynamic movement to changes in the arena, because the horizon that it opens up to is different from the horizons which people before it have opened up to: there are new conditions which impose themselves on human reality through the dominance of a certain intellectual school of thought or massive force, and there are complicated problems that challenge a lot of its causes and aspirations, and there are intellectual, political, social, economic and security labyrinths that (push) the contemporary person into striving to discover the signs which might guide him to the road to peace.

This reality of youth in its new world, which wants to produce a new reality, is perhaps what Imam 'Alī's words imply: **'Do not (try to) give your children your morals, for they have been created for a**

time other than yours.' The meaning of this may be that for every era there are certain conditions which produce new morals for it, with all the meanings implied by the word 'morals' in respect of intellectual and practical behaviour and the dynamic approach on the levels of public and private relations in issues of production, means and the dynamics of goals and all dynamic issues in the arena of humans ever searching anxiously for what is new in knowledge and reality.

I am not referring to this talk about youth that overindulges in every new thing that is produced by any intellectual school of thought in its time, so that the youth deviates from its historic intellectual roots, and becomes empty in its Islamic belief, like a blank page on which nothing about the intellectual doctrine, approach or behaviour is written. This cannot be what Imam 'Alī (as) intended in this pioneering words, for there are those Islamic issues of belief, legislation and approach that are considered unchangeable, since they represent the Divine truth which has been revealed to man to guide him through the Divine revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad (sawa). These cannot be argued about, or changed, except through the Qur'ānic or prophetic methods of change that the Islamic intellectual line allows in its interior dynamic circle.

Rather, I mean – in this extrapolation – that the older generation must not impose its own peculiarities on the younger generation. It is not essential that the youth understands from the traditional texts – the Book and the *Sunnah* – (exactly) what their fathers and forefathers have understood, for they can use practical methods in understanding the text to understand from it something different to what they (the fathers and forefathers) have understood when using the text's particulars in a different way to that which they (the fathers and forefathers) used to arrive at the rulings etc. (Moreover,) they

may discover some error in their understanding due to the influence of some contemporary and cultural objective circumstances, which imposed on them certain ideas, owing to the fact that any Jurist or thinker, in any intellectual position, cannot rid himself from the peculiarities of his own culture.

It is not necessary that the youth's understanding of life – its styles, means, relations and dynamics – is the same as that of the forefathers, (as if) making their needs similar to those of their fathers, since development may produce new needs for man; nor that the youth's social morals are the same as those of the past society.

Unchangeable things and changeable things

There are certain things in belief, the Islamic code (*Shari'ah*) and behaviour that are unchangeable and which Muslims must adhere to, and there are things that can be flexible and which Muslims may deal with dynamically in their lives. This is the differentiating line between what is unchangeable and what is changeable in the life dynamics of the Muslim, when he wants to save himself and his life and make his history, and bear the responsibility for all that, as the past generation did in making its history. Allāh the Most High says: **'That was a people that passed away; they shall reap the fruit of what they did, and you of what you did; you shall not be questioned about their actions.'** 2:134. This generation has a choice in producing its intellectual and practical gain, and must face its responsibility before God who requires every soul to argue for itself on the Day of Judgement.

Western materialism

The West is a new world that is distinguished by its materialist philosophy, which is so much overwhelmed by its service to the realm of the senses that it strives to transform the unknown of its religious thoughts into a world subjected to sensual materialist

atmospheres; it is also distinguished in its absolute thoughts regarding man's freedom which places the moral value in behaviour according to how much this value comes near or far from that freedom. In light of this, there is a very wide difference between Islamic thinking regarding God, man and life and Western thinking: the philosophy that imagines life as God's creation which He wants His successor to it – man – to be in charge of, on the basis that he should not forget his portion of his materialist needs in this earth when he looks forward to the Hereafter which represents the dynamic element of values, making the link between the materialistic means and the spiritual goal, so that the material is 'spiritualized' while the spirit takes on a materialistic style in its reality dynamics, putting the created man, to whom He has given freedom, before his responsibilities in managing his life affairs, and the philosophy which does not see any role for God in man's reality dynamics and in the process of making life.

We, at the same time, do not deny that there are some points at which we meet with the West. When dealing with West, we acknowledge the scientific and technical advancement that it has achieved, which covers some of our essential needs.

There is an important and vital point which is that our Islamic societies do not live up to a lot of Islam(ic concepts) in terms of thinking, dynamics and relationships because they are sunk in atmospheres clouded with ignorance and backwardness as a result of years that were lost in the labyrinths of deviation. The result is that Islam lives like foreigner in society which has reason, objectivity, humanistic values, freedom etc, at both social and political reality levels.

On the other hand, we find that some of these (Islamic) values are present in the relationships between Western people and others,

reducing the intensity of emotional reactions and of the overindulgence in individuality, in spite of some shortcomings in this or that side. This makes the picture in Islamic society, in some details of reality, darker and in Western society less so, in some places, something which leaves an impression on the youth when it starts comparing between their societies and Western societies, regardless of whether the impression is correct or not.

I would like, in this quick treatment, to concentrate briefly on two 'circles' of my speech:

My speech to the youth

This is the first circle: my speech with the youth who might look forward to overindulgence in the Western world, as if it is the promised paradise that will fulfil their greatest dreams. You have to think about your original intellectual and practical values as represented by your original human values in staying firm in the Islamic line in your dynamic movement in life. I do not mean by original values that you should accept the past wholesale, in all its details, but what I mean is that you should emphasize your Islam in opening up to everything that is new in thought and behaviour. This is because the new is not the new of the age you live in; one can say to you that you should live in your times, in all its intellectual development so that you do not lag behind in contemporary reality in a way that makes you a foreigner amongst people. But old and new ideas are the product of man not time – people might submit to a certain intellectual school of thought due to forces which control their reality, imposing it on life without any role for life to produce it as an outcome of development.

In light of this, it is essential that you engage in a comparison process – if you are in a position of intellectual objectivity – between the Islamic intellectual doctrine which you belong to in your adherence

to Islam, and the intellectual doctrine prevalent among people due to factors of the force which has imposed it upon reality. You might find in Islam an advanced intellectual doctrine that is opened up to real human interests, and discover that the contemporary intellectual doctrine is backward and unable to realistically treat the problems of the multi-dimensional man, having both material and spirit.

Adopting contemporary values, in its vital human sense, is not – in essence – something related to time dynamics, but something that belongs to man's dynamics in producing his humanity in his causes, problems and conditions. Give freedom to your own intellectual will in choosing the intellectual doctrine that you adhere to, with awareness and openness, away from all social emotional reactions that put pressure on you, due to emotional atmospheres, steal your thinking in the manner of the 'collective mind', and which makes the person lose his intellectual independence and free choice in the practical direction.

Original values represent the deep roots of man's humanity in the original thought which proceeds from Allāh and His Messenger, and which open up to all time and the whole of life, and are therefore not confined to the past, present or future in their time limitations.

Adopting contemporary values, on the other hand, means opening up to the times in the different dimensions of man's needs and true causes. His life will, thus, become balanced with regard to his adherence to Islam and his opening up to his times' causes, through his awareness of both in his intellectual judgements and spiritual awareness, in what gifts he possesses for making judgements and awareness to enable him to engage in dialogue with other intellectual schools of thought and other people.

And if the West represents a big practical force and wide technological advancement, we have to differentiate between the

particulars of science in civilization's dynamics and the particulars of intellectual and behavioural lines in man's relationship with God, himself and life. We do not see knowledge and scientific growth as a proof of the correctness of an intellectual approach in issues of belief, morals, behaviour, spirit and consciousness, but every issue will have to be studied according to its merits and vital influences on reality – in the (essence of) truth.

Moreover, we must study the issue of human freedom in more than one aspect, for we must not open up simply to the one dimension that represents the persons' individualistic case, but we must have an aware perceptiveness to both the individualistic and social sides and both the materialistic and spiritual sides. In addition, we must be clear about the fact of belief that man is God's creation, and he must act from the position of God's will in his dynamic movement in life and in managing his and the earth's affairs. This links the matter of his relationship with his Lord, with himself, with the people around him, with the earth on which he moves in its environmental and development reality and with the living or growing creatures on its surface, to that freedom to become responsible for all this, since man is not the only creature who suffers tragedy in limiting his freedom, for there is more than one position for tragedy in the particulars of the universal system. This imposes on him the necessity not to suffer the tragedy as a reaction within his self which weeps from self-impoverishment, but to live with it in an awareness of the needs or all that is around him, in addition to his own needs, since the Universe is not a lone person, but comprises animals, plants, sea and land, plains and mountains and various other categories, each one of which requires the other to integrate with it in existence and not to disregard it, which would lead to collapse in all its individual and communal situations.

There are other aspects, but due to space limitations I shall summarize the speech in one or two words: youth is not pleasure, desire, emotional reaction and happy dreams, but, rather, responsibility that is linked to the whole existence, humanity that is linked to man as a whole, spirituality that opens up to God and life and the Hereafter, to think about all this and to achieve a good fate in this life and in the dimensions of the after-life.

My speech to Islamic activists

This is the second circle: Islamic activists who follow the contemporary person's reality to study all his situations, thoughts, dimensions, methods and goals to plan for the dynamic movement that combines all these in order to find the best measures for rescuing Muslims from their shortcomings and for guiding them to attain more positive achievements. It is natural that the youth-and-the-West question should be one of the greatest concerns of the Islamic movement in the fields of the call, culture and life, (pointing to the need) to study all intellectual, spiritual and practical influences – both negative and positive – and all intellectual anxiety, practical deviation and loss of conscience, and to confront it with practical means that can provide the youth with the opportunity to express all queries, anxiety, rebellion and aimlessness that they have inside them, so that answers are provided, problems are treated or their effects minimized, all their feelings embraced and all objective circumstances surrounding their lives are appreciated through acknowledging their points of weakness and strength. We should not be limited to talking about the youth's deviation and aimlessness, or accusing them or judging them in order to score points against them.

Workers in the way of Allāh must attend to the youth of the Nation, know their intellectual and practical needs and explain to them all Islamic concepts and particulars, because, in their spiritual anxiety,

they (the youth) are looking for clarity in vision, awareness and knowledge.

And if we appreciate that the youth has its leisure and social needs, we must strive to establish sport and leisure clubs, which provide allowable leisure activities, so that they can fill their spare time, diverting them away from moving in other directions that provide the prohibited leisure that they will resort to when they do not find allowable leisure to engage in their spare time. Perhaps, it is natural that we should abandon the idea of considering leisure to be something negative as far as practical needs are concerned, since the narration says: **'The believer should have (divide his time into) three hours: one hour to worship his Lord, and one hour to work to earn a living, and one hour in which his soul engages in leisure in what is allowable and nice or something not prohibited, and this hour is a help for (attending to) the (first) two hours.'**

Then we should provide Islamic 'incubators': mosques, *Ḥusainiyyahs*, schools, cultural clubs and social atmospheres. The integration of committees and societies is a must, so that neither group starts from square one, but each one proceeds with the other.

I notice that Islamic movements in the West are very diverse in their situations, from a movement that overindulges in politics, disregarding any dynamic dimension for culture or spiritual atmospheres, to another which overindulges in culture and worship, disregarding any role for politics or social issues, to a third which shrinks from the world into its own particulars and peculiarities, abandoning reality and living in cultural, spiritual and political seclusion.

Then, there are partisanships that abandon Islamic adherence to what is allowable and prohibited by God. Also, marginal and secondary

problems can eat up fundamental and major issues, giving the youth a negative idea about Islamic work and making it reject the Islamic personalities who are loyal more to themselves than to Islam and their Lord, reject the Islamic groups – parties, movements and societies – each of which appear to work to bring down the temple over everyone unless the temple is for it alone, and are loyal only to the narrow framework inside which they imprison themselves and do not open up to Allāh, the Nation, Islam – in the present or future.

These times we are facing are some of the most difficult in the movement and course of Islam: the arrogant world has started a world war against the whole of Islam and all Muslims in the name of war on fundamentalism which does not exist according to Western concepts, and on terrorism, of which there is no example in our Islamic movement. So, shouldn't we proceed from this reality to face our responsibility at the level in which we can open a hole in the big arrogant wall that is erected as a partition between us and advancement in our Islamic positions, in the future of life and man?

Islamic unity between schools of thought, movements and groups is not a mere slogan that we raise for (easy) consumption, but a fateful and vital necessity for the whole of the Islamic reality, because the arrogant forces want the head of the whole of Islam. So, shouldn't we understand the nature of the arrogant game as it affects our reality, dynamic movement and supreme goals?

Chapter 7

Emigration Agendas

Words of Guidance

First: His Eminence's call to emigrants in all countries

Second: America

Third: Chicago – America (1998)

Fourth: Muslim Youth League – London, UK

Fifth: Australia

Sixth: Switzerland

Seventh: Norway

Eighth: Denmark

Ninth: The Netherlands

Tenth: Detroit – America (2001)

Questions from, and dialogues with, emigrants and expatriates

Words of Guidance

In this chapter, I would like to convey to the readers the valuable words of guidance that his Eminence Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaīn Faḍlullāh sent to his sons in places of emigration and various places of expatriation, and in which he raises many important and practical points, which – as they each complements the others – could be regarded as an emigration agenda. His Eminence has spared me from asking questions which relate to methods of work and dynamic movement in these arenas, since he has dealt with these, in both generalities and detail. Emigrants and expatriates can extract from these what they need in their activities in dealing with others, in preserving the Muslim identity and in seizing the opportunity to make these places of expatriation arenas for work and for the call to Allāh the Most High.

It is worth mentioning that his Eminence has received a lot of telephone calls regarding emigrant communities, and he has answered these in both fatherly and educational words in which the reader will feel how deeply they touch the emigrants' problems – one even feels almost as if his Eminence has himself experienced these problems – and similarly in his answers to the questions presented. Thus, I regard this vital chapter not simply as an appendix to the book, but as a central part of it.

First: His Eminence's call to emigrants in all countries 23 November 1998

Establishing Islamic centres

We believe that the reality which has been imposed on many Muslims, who have been unable to find security in their own countries, or the freedom to practise their religion and implement it, or could not preserve their dignity and strength, or could earn their living and a dignified life – this reality, which puts pressure on a lot of believers in more than one Islamic country, due to the fact that many Islamic countries are ruled by infidel, deviant, tyrannical or arrogant regimes which put pressure on their people and all positions of movement within them – we believe that confronted by this reality, a lot of Muslims – millions of them – have been forced to emigrate to the West. Muslims there must strive to establish Islamic centres and schools, and create Islamic atmospheres which preserve – for the expatriates, emigrants and those forced to emigrate – their religion, morals and Islamic identity, and likewise their freedom and dignity, and (they must strive to) establish new Islamic societies there. I always emphasize the need to establish Islamic schools that preserve for the (younger) generation its Islam, language, morals and religious adherence, even to the extent that I have launched – in the West – the slogan 'the school before the mosque'. We have to rescue our children from schools that, even if they offer science, might also in addition be the source of moral and intellectual deviation.

Abandoning partisanships and disputes

Muslims who have emigrated outside Muslim countries must abandon all their partisan, familial, regional and ethnic partisanships and disputes to unite in Islam which obliges them to be a strength for it through their unity, the integration of their powers and their

love of each other. This is what Allāh the Most High wants in His saying: **'And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh (which He stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves'** 3:103, and: **'Verily, this nation of yours is a single nation, and I am your (only) Lord, therefore serve (worship) me'** 21:92; also the Prophetic narration: **'Believers, in their love and mercy towards each other, are like one body: if one organ becomes ill, all other organs attend to it with fever and care.'** And if Allāh wants us to be Islamically unified in non-Muslim lands when circumstances force us to live there, the new place requires additional strength and more integration of powers, so that we can achieve strong, co-operative, integrated societies that confront other societies that want to invade us with their infidelity, deviation, corruption and immorality.

The close links between Muslims in places of emigration are what can give them a position of strength in which they can be steadfast, become stronger and confront others from a single position, similar to the way that Allāh described: **'Truly Allāh loves those who fight in His cause, in battle, in ranks as firm as a mighty edifice.'** 61:4. Fighting is not limited to weapons, but it can extend to political, cultural and social arenas.

Therefore my beloved (brothers and sisters), ease upon your disputes, especially those that do not achieve any positive result, but only negative results, such as those focusing on partisan lines, schools of thought, the Grand Authorities (*marji'iyyah*) and so on, which do not open up to a wider horizon. However, these can be dealt with by dialogue and argument in the most courteous manner. God the Most High, in his saying **'If you disagree among yourselves about anything, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger'** 4:59, wants us to refer, in disputes, to His Book and the *Sunnah* of

the Prophet (sawa), for in the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (sawa) we can find solutions to a lot of intellectual and social problems. Let arguments, discourse and defence in the most courteous manner be our method in dealing with others. God the Most High taught us how to use gentleness with others – and gentleness between ourselves – in His saying: **'A good deed and a bad deed are not equal; repel (the bad deed) with whatever (behaviour) is better, and treat him with whom you share enmity as if he is a dearest friend. And no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint – and no one will attain such goodness save only those who have the greatest good fortune.'** 41:34,35.

In light of this, (we can see that) Allāh the Most High wants us to transform the enemies of our religion into friends of our religion, and enemies of our causes unto friends of our causes; so (imagine) how Allāh also wants us to transform our enemies inside the religion into friends? Some narrations say that a Muslim cannot say to another Muslim: 'You are my enemy' for this represents a kind of infidelity, because Allāh says: **'The believers are but a single brotherhood'** 49:10; so if you say 'the believers are enemies' you are contradicting the saying of Allāh the Most High, and this essentially is atheism.

Therefore, my beloved (brothers and sisters): unity, and more unity! Come together around what you agree on, and engage in dialogue about what you disagree on. Do not harbour partisanship, but be adherents (observing your duties), because partisanship represents isolation from others while religious adherence represents firmness in stance along with opening up to others in dialogue about disagreements.

Acquiring more cultural knowledge

Whilst we emphasize the need (for Muslims) to preserve their own religion and that of their families and their society, they must also strive to acquire more cultural knowledge so that they can call others to Islam, because Allāh has sent it to all mankind, and this is His saying: **'We have sent you forth to all mankind, so that you may give them good news and forewarn them'** 34:28, and **'We have sent you forth but as a mercy to all creatures.'** 21:107. So, if the Prophet (sawa) has come with his Message to all mankind, we have to bear the Message after him, so that Islam spreads by calling to Allāh in our time as it did in the past, and we have to convey Islam to the generation which succeeds us as others did for us.

We must be callers to Allāh in whatever position on earth we find ourselves in, and must strive to take Islam to the whole world by presenting Islam as it is in its originality, being open to people, based on the lines of justice, truthfulness and human values that move dynamically on the basis which the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī (as) described: **'Men are of two kinds: a brother to you in religion, and one who resembles you in creation.'**

Also, we have to be just to all people – both those who are with us and those against us, and this is the Most High's saying: **'Do not allow your hatred for other men to turn you away from justice; deal justly; that is nearer to true piety'** 5:8, and His saying: **'O believers, conduct yourselves with justice and bear true witness before Allāh, even though it be against yourselves, your parents or your kinsfolk'** 4:135, and His saying: **'Let there arise out of you a group of people, inviting all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong (evil); they are the ones who will attain success.'** 3:104.

We face a lot of problems, disturbances and pressures, but we must forbear, as Allāh the Most High wants us to be: **'Did you suppose that you would go to Paradise untouched by such trials as the suffering that was endured by those before you? Affliction and adversity befell them; and they were so shaken in spirit that the apostle and those who shared his faith cried out: "When will Allāh's help come?" Verily, Allāh's help is ever near'** 2:214, and His saying: **'You shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in you personal selves, and you shall certainly hear, from those who received the Book before you and from the polytheists, much that will hurt you; but if you persevere patiently and are God-fearing, then that will be a determining factor in all affairs.'** 3:186.

Conveying Allāh's Messages

You must strive to be callers to Allāh, everyone according to his culture, capability, arena and role. The emigrant is God's messenger to people after the Messenger, and a messenger in the footsteps of the Messenger. Allāh says: **'You have indeed in the Messenger of Allāh a good example (role model), for those whose hope is in Allāh and the Final Day, and who engage much in the praise of Allāh (or who always remember Allāh)'** 33:21, and one way of taking the Prophet (sawa) as your role model is to be callers to Allāh as the Prophet (sawa) was. We have to embrace the spirituality that makes us open up to Allāh the Most High with our minds, hearts and spirits, through more worship, which can elevate us to Allāh, and more supplication, and by holding ourselves to account (judging ourselves) and admitting (sin) before Allāh, because spirituality is what preserves for the person the firmness in his stance and belief and the balance of his course in the line of straightness.

(When we say) **'Our Lord is Allāh'**, we must say it with our minds, hearts and lives, and with all our power, and keep on the straight path, proceeding from the (premise of) opening up to live with Allāh, for this is Allāh's saying: **'(As for) those who say: "Our Lord is Allāh," and then further stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend to them (from time to time): "Fear you not!" (they say), "Nor grieve! But receive the good news of the Paradise that you have been promised! We are your guardians in this life and in the Hereafter; therein you shall have all that your souls shall desire; therein you shall have all that you ask for! (A rich provision) from a forgiving and merciful (God).'"** 41:30-32.

Unity, unity, unity! Straightness, straightness! Work, work! This is Ali's call to the whole of the Nation, in his time and ours. We have to be callers to Allāh through our behaviour, religious adherence and the nature of our relationships with others. **'Be callers for the people without your tongues, so that they see in you truth, goodness and God-fearing, for this is a caller'** as Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) said. Be truthful with people, and trustworthy for them – in their possessions, honour, souls and security, even if they are infidels, because we have to fulfil our obligations to them. Abandon any action that harms trust in people's possessions and do not listen to anyone who makes non-Muslim possessions allowable for you (to take), or who makes it allowable (to offend) the honour of non-Muslims, or to harm their security, except in self-defence.

Various responsibilities

A world war is currently being waged – in the media, politics and culture – in an attempt to distort Islam's image by drawing the attention to the Muslims who do not bear up to the responsibility of manifesting Islam's image in their deeds. Be the generation and the

communities in which, if people look, they will see an Islam that is open and morally abiding in all fields of life.

When you face legal problems, try to solve them without incurring harm to your presence (in your adopted land) or your freedom.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): we must preserve ourselves and our families, and we have to open up to the young generation so as to deepen their Islam, religious adherence, morals and spirituality. Take up your responsibilities: **'All of you are guardians (shepherds), and every guardian is responsible for his flock.'** You are in countries to which our vital issues may be linked, through their political stances and arrogant plans; therefore, try to talk to the people (there) about all your Islamic issues, wherever you experience problems, be they economic or political, or questions of security and sanctions or colonialism.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): let every one of you be a Muslim to a capacity equal to Islam's, and to Islam's need for calling (to it), in its strength, propagation and the depth of its original meaning. Let there be conferences in which you discuss your issues in the place of emigration and your homeland, and your future; get to know each other, and cooperate in solving your problems; keep in touch and exchange expertise and experiences. Let the conferences aim to establish new relationships, plans and conditions. In this period of our Islamic history, we are facing great challenges in the Palestinian, Lebanese, Iraqi, Iranian and Afghani arenas, and also a lot of problems in which international arrogant forces strive – both from within and from outside – to shake the Islamic reality, to impoverish it and weaken it, and to make it a mere annexe to it.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): we have to embrace Islam's responsibility and plan for our responsibilities for the future of Islam. With all my love and prayers, all the longing which I feel towards you, and the responsibility which I feel for you, wherever you are.

Second: His Eminence's word of guidance on the anniversary of the birthday of Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) 13 November 1998, to emigrants and expatriates in America

When we meet on this great occasion – the anniversary of the birthday of Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as), which coincides with the birthday of al-'Abbās (as), on the 4th day of Sha'bān, and the birthday of Imam Zaīn al-'Ābidīn (as), on the 5th day of Sha'bān, we are acknowledging that Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) lived all his life with his grandfather, father and mother, in the line of the Message and the later Imamate, and with Islamic values that open up to the reality of Muslims, on both intellectual and practical levels.

Later, he opened up to all the causes of the Nation, from the position of the Messenger and the Message-bound line, through the words of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa): the narrators mentioned that the first speech by which Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) launched his movement was: **'O men! Verily the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) has said: "Anyone who sees an unjust ruler who permits those things which have been forbidden by Allāh, who disregards his duty, who opposes the way of the Messenger of Allāh, and acts amongst the servants of Allāh sinfully and aggressively – and that person does not do anything, in action or speech, to change the situation, then Allāh shall certainly place him along with the tyrant ruler (on the Day of Judgement)... Verily, these people have abided by the obedience of Satan and abandoned the obedience of the Merciful, and have made the forbidden of Allāh allowable and His allowable forbidden, and kept the income (from war and so on) to themselves, and stopped carrying out Islamic punishments; and I am more obliged than anyone else to change (the situation).'"**

From this, we see that the movement of Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) was an internal change, achieved by transforming the person, in his intellect, heart and dynamic movement in reality, into a person who would live Islam at true level of its values, and open up to Allāh to meet with all people along this pure line that spreads through the person's dynamics and the reality of his life.

He (as) wanted to change the political reality that was crushing people with injustice, oppression, humiliation, the usurpation of freedom and the mismanagement of their economy, security and their whole reality. This was what he pointed out to: **'I have risen to seek to reform the nation of my grandfather. I wish to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong (evil)... So, whosoever accepts me in truth then Allāh is more worthy of the truth, and with whosoever rejects me I shall be patient.'**

Our role on his anniversary

We, my beloved (brothers and sisters), are trying to open up to Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) by changing intellectually, by banishing all false thoughts from our minds and hearts by ridding them of all negative emotions and feelings, and practically and dynamically by ridding our lives from all false lines and non-Islamic conditions.

We can participate with Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) in his renaissance in the spread of his line when our words become like his, our morals like his, our values like his and our movement towards confronting injustice and arrogant forces like his.

Your presence in those areas that are distant from Islam's reality and countries places on your shoulders the great responsibility of living the line of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa), who said: **'I have only been sent to complete the best of morals'**, and the line of the Imams of *Ahlul Bayt* (as), who were lights that shone onto the minds,

hearts and movements of people. Therefore, affiliation to the original Islamic line and the sacred symbols (individuals) requires us to manifest the intellectual and practical line this affiliation imposes on us, so that we become Muslims in our minds and hearts, and in our movement in life.

Integration of capabilities

In this area, we must try to integrate our capabilities, on individual and institutional levels, because the society which you have produced in expatriate countries has become integrated through the fact that you have come from different countries and conditions. This society calls upon you to enhance it spiritually, intellectually, in values and scientifically, and stipulates that every one of you must not cling to his individuality to an extent that separates him from others, or to his own selfish interest to the extent that he becomes submerged in it, and (this society stipulates) that no institute should be separated from the others.

We believe that what is required from everyone in these diverse societies is that common ground should be found between them, and also on the level of the big challenges that are not facing one individual, one institution or one group, but the whole of society. This is especially so when those who launch challenges upon us have complexes about Islam and Muslims, either due to religious complexes or racist tendencies, or other for reasons that push them into partisanship.

You must be one force, with one stance and one position. One individual or one institute may have a particular character, but we have to make these peculiarities a foundation for integration so that each one enriches the other with its experience, and all enrich the

supreme cause with their diverse experiences, so that there shall be unity in diversity and diversity in unity.

This is what Allāh wants from you in His saying: **'And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allāh (which He stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allāh's favour to you when you were enemies, and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became brethren; and you were on the very brink of the abyss of Fire, and he saved you from it; thus Allāh makes His signs (or revelations) clear to you that you may be (rightly) guided'** 3:103, and: **'Verily, this nation of yours is a single nation, and I am your (only) Lord, therefore serve (worship) me'** 21:92, and the Prophet's *ḥadīth*: **'Believers, in their love and mercy towards each other, are like one body: if one organ becomes ill, all other organs attend to it with fever and care.'**

Your responsibility is really big: to unify your society on the basis of good and God-fearing piety.

The school before the mosque

There is an important point, which I wish to raise every now and then: 'the school before the mosque', because we face a very big problem – the problem of the younger generation who must acquire knowledge, culture and education. We know that the schools there (in places of emigration) may have scientific prowess, but they differ from our moral and educational lines and Islamic obligations. This makes entering such schools beneficial scientifically, but harmful from the point of view of moral teaching, up-bringing and religious education, in general.

Therefore, your responsibility towards this generation of your children is to prepare for them Islamic schools that provide them

with the scientific syllabuses of those countries in addition to the moral atmospheres and religious teaching, and preserves the Arabic tongue so that the Arabic language of the next generation of emigrants stays correct, the result of which will be to preserve the identity of the generation and to prevent it from moving away from the essential characteristics of its personality and position.

I call for this educational project, knowing that there is a variety of experience in this field, and call upon you to support these experiences and to establish these schools on the basis of Islam and piety.

The Islamic family

There is another point which I would like to raise in your society: the responsibility of the family to be an Islamic family, in which each of its members – fathers, mothers and children – strive to transform the home into an Islamic one, believing in Islam, worshipping God the Most High, and to proceed in all its practical steps with others on the basis of Islamic values and morals, because the fathers and mothers are responsible for all of this, each according to their capabilities: **'Allāh does not place a greater burden on any soul than it can bear'** 2:286, but Allāh will bring them to account regarding this, whatever its scale. Allāh the Most High says, addressing the believers: **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones, under the charge of fierce and mighty angels who never disobey Allāh's command and who promptly do His bidding.'** 66:6.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): whilst I talk to you from a distance, I feel my responsibility in all that I am talking to you about, for the matter that faces us in these places of expatriation is to preserve our Islamic society and, at the same time, to undertake – on

a personal level – the responsibility of bringing up ourselves, our sons and our daughters in Islam, and work – on a public level – to educate ourselves in the way by which we can call others to Islam.

Calling to Islam

I believe that the nature of the people in your expatriate country might make this endeavour easier, since they are not living with a complex about Islam itself, as is the case with other peoples. Therefore, we must call other people to Islam and educate ourselves in Islam, so that we can open up to the line of calling to Allāh the Most High. And remember that Islam spread in some places in the world as a result of the activities of Muslim merchants and workers who had gone to these areas and felt their responsibility of talking to other people about Islam and to show them the bright image of Islam through their conduct. Therefore, I emphasize the need to manifest Islam in the trust, truthfulness and justice of your relationships with others, and you should not listen to those who tell you to take other people's possessions without just cause, or to transgress against them without just cause, or to damage the public order in the country, or to use terrorist methods that harm civilians and contravene the laws of the land.

This country opened its arms to you so that you could escape from the pressures under which you lived in your countries. Therefore, we must not betray that trust, and it is not allowed for us to talk with others except with truthfulness, and it is not allowed for us to harm public order or people's security. Be nice, truthful, trustworthy guests in all this. I, from my Islamic legal position, declare it forbidden for all the believers there to transgress with other people's possessions, or with their honour or security, whatever the circumstances and conditions.

Containing disputes

Finally my beloved (brothers and sisters): I urge you to control all disputes that you have inherited from your (original) societies, whether partisan, sectarian or political. We are not telling you to put your disputes aside, but we say: 'proceed from the common word, then try to engage in dialogue with each other in what you disagree about with wisdom and good advice and argument in the most courteous manner, and strive to come together around what you agree on, and to engage in dialogue about what you disagree on.' This is the way to achieve understanding amongst you and which will lead to intellectual unity, when each one of you lays down his proof in the good way that can transform an enemy into a friend, as Allāh describes: **'A good deed and a bad deed are not equal; repel (the bad deed) with whatever (behaviour) is better, and treat him with whom you share enmity as if he is a dearest friend.'** 41:34.

Responsibility towards orphans

This good charity meeting addresses the tragedy, which the conditions of the Lebanese war and other events imposed on some people to make them orphans who have lost their fathers, and perhaps their mothers as well. You should take up your responsibility towards them with all available means: sponsoring, donation and help. The *ḥadīth* says: **'I and the orphan's sponsor are like these (two fingers) in Paradise.'** And in the last part of the Commander of the Faithful's advice before he died (he said): **'I remind you of your responsibility before Allāh towards orphans – do not close their mouth (silence them), and they should not be left unattended in your presence.'** We have to provide care for these orphans by helping the institutions that embrace, educate and nurture them, and then take them on to universities, especially the charitable

institutions that have undertaken this responsibility in addition to other responsibilities.

I give permission to pay legal (Islamic) money obligations to this endeavour, and would like you to bear this responsibility, whether yourselves or by inviting friends and families to do so, in order to improve the orphans' conditions and to strive to prepare dignified lives for all of them.

In closing, I would like to remember the gracious late scholar Sheikh Muḥammad Jawād Shirrī, who was the first scholar from the school of *Ahlul Bayt* (as) to come to these lands, and who attended to his Islamic responsibilities, established the Islamic Centre and proceeded to further his activities in the line of *Ahlul Bayt* (as) through his many books. He worked towards Islamic unity through his letter to Sheikh Maḥamūd Shaltūt, the then head of al-Azhar Mosque (Cairo, Egypt), requesting him to recognize the Shi'ite school of thought as an Islamic school which people are allowed to follow; he succeeded in this goal, and continued his activities on many fronts. Therefore, we remember him with all love and ask Allāh to bless him with His mercy and Paradise, and to help those in charge of the Islamic Centre to follow the course of the gracious scholar al-Shirrī so that it continues its Islamic endeavour in the line of calling to Allāh the Most High.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): I talk to you with all my mind, heart, feelings and my responsibility to be in the original Islamic line, and to open up to others on the basis of responsibility, trust, truthfulness and the call to Allāh, with wisdom and good advice.

Third: His Eminence's words of guidance to the youth Chicago, America, 27 April 1998

Original Islam first

I am talking to you, from a distance, to remind you of what I always remind myself: Islam on the original line, and this is the line of *Ahlul Bayt* (as) – to live it intellectually in your minds so that there is no other intellect except Islam's, to live it as a pulse in your hearts so that they (your hearts) do not pulsate except with the love of Allāh, His Messenger, *Ahlul Bayt* and His (allegiant) people, who followed their course with all straightness and loyalty, and to live it in your practical conduct so that you do not take a single step forwards or backwards unless you know that this will win Allāh's satisfaction. This is because Islam is Allāh's religion which represents our salvation in this life and the Hereafter: Allāh the Most High says: **'O believers, give your response to Allāh and the Messenger when He calls you to that which will give you life'** 8:24 – so it is the depth of life in this life, through all that it has for the good of man in all his affairs, and it is the depth of life in the Hereafter in its opening up to Allāh's satisfaction and in the positions of grace in Paradise which Allāh has promised all pious people.

You left your countries because you adhered to Islam as a basis for intellect, emotion and life. Therefore, do not lose Islam when you live in non-Muslim countries and in a society moving with infidel values and atmospheres in which the spiritual depth in your lives cannot grow. Protect your Islam and that of your children more than you protect your bodies and possessions, since if you lose Islam in your selves and your families you will suffer great loss; Allāh says: **'Say: "Truly, they will lose much those who lose their own souls**

and their kinsfolk on the Day of Resurrection; that is indeed the ultimate loss!'" 39:15.

You must be precise in all of Islam's dynamics, and take it from those who have Islam as knowledge, live it as piety and move dynamically in the line of trust and straightness. Do not take it from the ignorant or corrupt, or those who have gone astray, or from those who lead people astray or from those who live in partisanship, hatred and enmity. Remember God's saying: **'Say: "Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose endeavours in this life are misguided and who yet think that what they do is right."'** 18:103,104.

Judge your selves

My beloved (brothers and sisters): you must live with yourselves in a state of judging your selves before Allāh, so do not lose your awareness of your souls for one moment, but supervise them (to check) for any feelings that are distant from Allāh's satisfaction, which may get through to your souls, or for any thoughts that might make falsehood appear as truth, or that might be a word of truth but used for the purpose of falsehood. Therefore 'Judge your selves before you are judged (in the Hereafter), and appraise them before you are appraised'; **'O believers, fear Allāh, and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow; and fear Allāh, for Allāh is well-acquainted with (all) that you do. And do not be like those who forgot Allāh, so He made them forget their own souls! Such are the corrupt people. The heirs of the Fire and the heirs of Paradise shall not be held equal; the heirs of Paradise (alone) shall be the winners.'** 59:18-20.

The bonds of the brotherhood of belief

Remember that Allāh has linked you together with the bond of brotherhood, the brotherhood of belief, which is greater than the brotherhood of kinship, since kinship relationship can lose its meaning when it abandons the relationship of belief. This is what Allāh the Most High said to Noah (as) regarding his son, who drowned with the infidels: **'O my Lord! Surely My son is of my family and your promise is true'** 11:45, (and Allāh answered him): **'O Noah! He is not of your family: (for) his conduct was unrighteous'** 11:46. And remember the lines of the poet Abu Firās al-Ḥamdāniyy:

Salmān's love of them (*Ahlul Bayt*) was kinship (to him)
But between Noah and his (own) son, there was no kinship!

Belief is the true kinship because it stays and (continues beyond life) to the Hereafter. Allāh the Most High says regarding this: **'On that Day friends will be foes, one to another – except the God-fearing'** 43:67; fearing God thus represents the continuing relationship to the Day of Judgement, hence the pious feel that they are one team and one society. Allāh tells us that those who will be together with their relatives are the righteous: **'Gardens of Eden; they shall enter there, as well as the righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their offspring, and angels shall enter unto them from every gate. (With the salutation) "Peace unto you for all that you have steadfastly endured, now how excellent is the (your) final home."'** 13:23,24. Take notice of His saying **'the <u>righteous</u> among their fathers'**, <u>not all</u> their fathers, spouses and offspring.

Therefore, I call upon you to proceed from His saying: **'The believers are but a single brotherhood'** 49:10, moving in the line of this brotherhood that imposes on you the responsibility of

mending disputes between your brothers so as to **'make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers'** 49:10, because belief requires you not to be neutral when your believing brothers separate into groups and sects, and we have to understand that what God brings together cannot be separated except by Him alone. And when you disagree on what is the truth and what is falsehood, Allāh has outlined the way to deal with such disputes: **'If you disagree among yourselves about anything, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger'** 4:59, and: **'A good deed and a bad deed are not equal; repel (the bad deed) with whatever (behaviour) is better, and treat him with whom you share enmity as if he is a dearest friend. And no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint.'** 41:34,35. So be patient with your feelings, conflicts and partisanships to open up to the truth by the nearest way: **'no one will attain such goodness save only those who have the greatest good fortune.'** 41:35.

The areas of agreement are numerous

My beloved (brothers and sisters): you come together around Islam, and because all of you say: 'There is no God but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh', and agree on the line of *Ahlul Bayt* (as) as to who are the successors and vicegerents of the Prophet (sawa) – so if for you this line represents the depth of agreement between you, how come you allow any dispute to separate you?! Do you realize the meaning of this? It means that neither Allāh, nor the Messenger and the Imams from his progeny represent any respect in your reality, for if you argue with or hate each other, separate, become enemies and fight each other, through this or that line, in this or that dispute, and do not feel the

brotherhood in Allāh, His Messenger and his progeny, what sort of adherence to Allāh, His Messenger and his progeny is this?! If this does not bring you together to solve your problems according to Allāh's way – **'Say to my servants that they should say those things that are best'** 17:53, and **'And reason with them in the most courteous manner'** 16:125, when Allāh called upon the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) to share a common word between them and us, despite all the disagreements between them and us both in fundamentals and in detail – why cannot we learn to call upon the people of the Qur'ān to share a common word between them and us?! I remind you of the saying of one Imam (as): **'If the believer says to his brother: "You are my enemy", one of them becomes an infidel!'** This is because Allāh tells you that this person is your brother, yet you say that he is your enemy, so Allāh is saying something and you say the opposite to that: in its depth, this is infidelity, even if you are not aware of it.

The cause of the confiscated homeland

This is in the general line. In the (more) particular line, you have a cause that represents your tragedy, and that of your families there, who suffer hunger, injustice, deprivation, a future which is surrounded by fog from all sides, and international arrogant forces who have given the tyrant all opportunities to stay and thus to bring about many political dangers in the area, and who have placed your country under sanctions using the excuse that these are sanctions on the tyrant when they know that the tyrant does not get hungry but that those who do are your families, and that he has the money when you do not have the money to buy the food and medicine.

The cause must unify you. Why aren't you living at present with your families? Why does a father leave his children, a mother her children,

a brother his brothers and a husband his wife? Isn't this because there is injustice which drove you to undertake this kind of forced emigration and expulsion? Why don't you unify before your wounds bleed political, economic and social blood from all of your bodies and nerves?! Why do you submerge yourselves in your disputes like this? We know that you have moved dynamically as different lines in the name of the cause, so how come you risk bringing the cause down for the sake of these lines?! Why all this?

I do not want now to enter into the task of differentiating between the right path and the path of falsehood, for this is not what I want; what I want is to say to you that if your convictions differ, why don't you enter into dialogue? Why does each one of you stand up to destroy the position of the others?!

I understand that all of you raise your voice in the name of the martyr of Islam, its thinker, its creator of lines and dynamic movement, the great martyr Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir aṣ-Ṣadr, so why don't you – and you have intellectuals and scholars amongst you – enter into dialogue about the nature of his line and your positions of agreement in his lines so that you can move dynamically in them?! To honour the blood of the martyr aṣ-Ṣadr and his sister Bint al-Hodā, and blood of all scholars and martyrs that has flowed like rivers, is to preserve your unity on the Islamic line, because they were not martyred so that you would be separated, but so that you would be united.

Therefore, my beloved (brothers and sisters), I say to you from the bottom of my heart and my mind what Allāh says: **'And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh (which He stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allāh's favour on you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts in**

love, so that by His grace you became brethren; and you were on the very brink of the abyss of Fire, and he saved you from it' 3:103. This verse was addressed to the Muslims in Medina at the time of the Prophet (sawa). However, I say to you: 'Remember Allāh's bounty to you when you were brothers, but Satan separated you; your hearts were in harmony but have become distant and separated; your line was one line and is many now; you were cooperating for Islam and for raising (its banner) in your country and the world, and now – I am afraid – you are cooperating to tear Islam and the cause apart!' This assertion might be harsh, but feeling the burden of the reality makes me talk to you from a position of love - you know that I lived amongst you in Iraq, breathed the air there, drunk the water, lived the prime of my life there, and I still live there although I am now distant from it.

I hope that you unify in Islam, for it holds your salvation in this life and the Hereafter, and to unify in the cause of your unity with all your evicted brothers and sisters is the way to persuade the world to stand up for you for the sake of your cause.

During the latest conflict between America (the US) and the tyrant (Saddam), the excuse for keeping the tyrant was that the Iraqi opposition could not unify, so if we topple him – and he is the symbol of unity (!) – blood will run like rivers. In this respect, Madeline Albright, the American Secretary of State, said: 'We need half a million soldiers to keep the peace and security in Iraq so that the Iraqis do not tear each other apart'; do you accept this?! I know that this is not realistic talk, and that they use it to justify their policies, (but) I also know that you suffer from this fragmentation whilst practising it.

O sons of 'Alī and al-Ḥusaīn

My beloved (brothers and sisters): you are the sons of 'Alī and al-Ḥusaīn in an-Najaf and Kerbalā', and here I am addressing you as we approach (the day of) 'Āshūrā'. Do you remember al-Ḥusaīn (as)? Do you think that al-Ḥusaīn accepts this separation and fragmentation? If you want to give a present to Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as) and the good, chosen people of his family and companions, give them your straightness in the line, your love of each other and the rejection of doubt about the intentions of your brothers. If you love 'Alī (as), he says: **'Think good about the words that come out of your brother, and do not suspect that there is bad content in any word that has come out of your brother when you can find a good explanation for it.'** However, (it seems that) we have changed 'Alī's word to become: 'Think the worst about the words that have come out of your brother, and do not think good of them when you can find bad or evil content in it!'

My beloved (brothers and sisters): unify in al-Ḥusaīn (as), who has risen to seek to reform the nation of his grandfather, to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong (evil). Fear God the Most High the best you can and open up to all the goodness and all the truth. Proceed through your responsibilities without thinking about the individuals to whom you are affiliated, but think about the day when all mankind will stand up before Allāh **'On the day when every soul will come pleading for itself'** 16:111, **'(It will be) the day when no soul shall have power (to do) anything for another; and the command that day will be (wholly) with Allāh.'** 82:19. Think about that day; when you are allowed to speak, what are you going to say?! – **'the day when wealth and offspring will avail nothing, and when none shall be saved except him who comes before**

his Lord with a pure heart' 26:88 – 'pure' from infidelity, hatred and aggression.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): I remind you of your responsibility before Allāh regarding your unity... I remind you of your responsibility before Allāh regarding your Islam... I remind you of your responsibility before Allāh regarding the original line of *Ahlul Bayt* (as)... I remind you of your responsibility before Allāh regarding your families now and in the future, which must be a movement for a better life and a better Hereafter, and must proceed in the ever rising course that we can infer from the famous supplication: **'O Lord! Make my future better than my past, and the best of my deeds the last ones, and the best of my days the day in which I meet You.'**

Fourth: Extract from his Eminence's words of guidance to the Muslim Youth League London, UK, 20 December 1996

I believe that the present era requires from us to live lives of 'intellectual piety', in addition to 'piety of the dynamic movement' and 'piety in relationships', so that we can open our minds, hearts and senses to Allāh the Most High, making Allāh the only thing that we ask inspiration from, and asking for His mercy in all these areas, so that He is before us in our negative and positive relationships and difficult situations and in the conscience by which we judge ourselves to be placed in His satisfaction or wrath.

Your presence in this area imposes upon you a lot of responsibilities: to protect yourselves from being affected by any intellectual or practical deviation, and to face the other (non-Muslim) world by making yourself the bright image of Islam, as a credible example of Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq's *ḥadīth*: **'Be callers for the people without your tongues, so that they see in you truth, goodness and God-fearing, for this is a caller.'**

Fifth: His Eminence's word of guidance to emigrant youths Australia, 26 October 1996

I would like to raise a few points:

The first point: straightness

You emigrated to these places of expatriation, which differ in their traditions, habits, morals and intellect to yours, because you lost freedom in your country when it was transformed into a big prison, and you lost the ability to practise your humanity in your land because the tyrannical regime crushed man's humanity, and because you had been forbidden from worshipping Allāh as He wants, and from obeying Him as He should be obeyed.

You escaped with your religion as did the emigrants from Mecca to Medina, wrongfully driven from your lands because you said: **'Our Lord is Allāh'**, and because you worshipped Him and abandoned the tyrants – and this is the Message of all Prophets (as). So what I would like to say to you is that a belief for which a man sacrifices all his life, and a religion for which a man stands up against all harm so that it stays alive in the mind, heart, feelings and reality, deserve from you – and you are in another environment – that you should strive to protect them from yourselves, for our souls encourage us to do evil except with God's mercy. This is because a person might fear the threat to his religion and belief from his self when he goes away from the atmospheres of belief and Allāh's worship; he might submit to a corrupt, aimless atmosphere, might be controlled by it when it sees him alone in that desert in which there is no greenery, water or nourishment in terms of belief, morals or straightness.

Therefore, preserve your religion, for you are in a land where all thieves gather to steal your religion from you, in a reality where all

deviant people gather to make you deviate from the right path, and in areas where all forbidden desires are presented to you on a golden plate!

My beloved (brothers and sisters): this life, however it is laid out, ornamented and decorated, and widened, you must see it in your heart's perception, not in your eyes: **'as the earth is clad with its ornaments and is decked out (in beauty), the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it, there reaches it Our command by night or by day, and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished only the day before!'** 10:24. This life cannot suffice and be a replacement of the Hereafter, for in it a person may feel hungry or satisfied, and well clothed or naked, but he will (definitely) hear the call when he is standing before Allāh on the morrow, to present the account of his deeds: **'A day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds'** 83:6, **'(It will be) the day when no soul shall have power (to do) anything for another; and the command that day will be (wholly) with Allāh'** 82:19; **'On the day when every soul will come pleading for itself'** 16:111; and he shall be given his book (of deeds): **'(It will be said to him:) "Here is your book – read it; it is enough for you this day that your own soul should call you to account'** 17:14, and if he has committed much crime and has done much evil: **'They will say: "Woe to us! What a book is this?! It leaves out nothing small or great: but takes account thereof!" They will find all that they did placed before them; and your Lord will not treat with injustice.'** 18:49.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): Straightness, straightness... Religion, religion... Islam, Islam... Allāh, Allāh... In all this, try to do your best to prevent your souls from (falling into) aimlessness and (indulging in the unnecessary) leisure which surround you.

If you wanted to devalue your religion to deviate here, commit a crime there, do evil here and there, then go back to your country, because the tyranny of man might be less harmful to a person than the tyranny of desire and deviation or any tyranny that drives someone from his religion. If a man lives in oppression, to pray to his Lord and refer his problems to Him is less harmful than living well but in disobedience and rebellion to his Lord.

What I would like you to do is to proceed to live your religion among you, and to try to establish in every country in which you live an 'incubator' that 'incubates' your belief and spirituality. Come to prayer gatherings, especially for Kumayl's supplication on Friday nights (i.e. Thursday evenings) and try to bring into your awareness 'Alī (as) when he prayed to his Lord, so that you live – whilst you are there – with 'Alī in his opening up to Allāh and his prayers to Him. Try to discuss your concerns and your religion, putting aside an hour (each day) for your religion, to study and practise it, with all power that you have, for if a person preserves his religion he preserves this life and the Hereafter, but if he loses his religion he loses this life and the Hereafter: **'Say: "Shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose endeavours in this life are misguided and who yet think that what they do is right"'** 18:103,104; **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones, under the charge of fierce and mighty angels who never disobey Allāh's command and who promptly do His bidding'** 66:6; **'O believers, fear Allāh, and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow; and fear Allāh, for Allāh is well-acquainted with (all) that you do. And do not be like those who forgot Allāh, so He made them forget their own souls! Such are the corrupt people. The heirs of the Fire and the heirs of Paradise shall not**

be held equal; the heirs of Paradise (alone) shall be the winners.' 59:18-20.

The second point: unity

You – with each one of you coming from a different town – as each of you opens up to a certain political or social line, amongst the lines over which you used to differ in your own countries (and which you wish to implement for your countries): in terms of ideas about which party, or which group, for which religious symbol, and by which process to follow (them) or otherwise, (you find yourselves) in your places of expatriation longing to breathe again the air of an-Najaf, al-Kūfah, Baghdad, al-Baṣrah, an-Nāṣiriyyah, Kerbalā', al-Kādhimaīn, Sāmarrā' etc. There is a big dream gathering in your Iraq. You cannot obtain freedom in this or that town unless the whole of the homeland is free, but if there is no unity bringing you together to integrate and utilise your peculiarities in the public cause, you will instead bring down the public cause for the sake of your peculiarities.

In addition, you engage in disputes: one party here and another there, one symbol here and another there, and one council here and another there, whilst you are not in your own land. I say to you my beloved (brothers and sisters): prepare the (engineering) drawings as you like, on how to organize the country according to this or that party, but take the land first – then the drawing can be implemented! We should not engage in disputes regarding the decoration when we do not have a land to stand on; first we should (have the land) and build the foundations, then the building, and after that we can think about the decoration, whether in an Eastern or Western style!

Therefore, you should unify around your Islam, in which you might differ regarding your way of understanding it, or the lines of its leadership, but, through this, Islam becomes stronger with you, and at that point, you can (start) to differ in points of view. For reason, awareness, progress, civilization and Islam are far removed from a situation in which you fight so that each one builds a house where he worships his own personality or his party, as some do – one *Ḥusayniyyah* for this group and one for another, and one scholar for this group and another for another.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): do not worship idols! Partisanship might be an intellectual doctrine at the start, but it can end up becoming transformed into an idol that we worship, even if we destroy the intellectual doctrine from which it was launched. Leadership represents a symbol for launching, but we must not worship leadership, but keep it as a symbol, and if it takes us in the way of Allāh we go with it, but if it does not we abandon it.

Therefore, unity, unity and unity! I am not telling you to erase your differences, but to put them on hold and to improve your movement by practising differences in points of view, so that they become a source for enriching reality instead of a source of poverty and weakness.

The third point: trust

You are living in a country which has accepted you as guests, so that your pains are relieved and you are rescued from the loss that you endured in your country. Therefore, you must preserve the security of the country in which you are living. If anyone comes to you asking you to do anything that disturbs that security, say to him: 'We are in a country which has been a good host to us, so therefore we do not want to harm it.'

My beloved (brothers and sisters), from my legal Islamic position I declare as forbidden any actions that harm the security of the country, for this is a jurisprudence matter: **'Allāh does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for (your) religion, nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them; for Allāh loves those who are just'** 60:8; this is a Qur'ānic line.

Also, protect the possessions of others even if they are non-Muslims. Ignore any *fatwā* which declares it allowable (to take) non-Muslims' possessions, for we cannot take other people's possessions whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, unless we are engaged in real, actual war with them.

In light of this, I, from my legal Islamic position, declare forbidden any transgression with people's possessions out there, whatever the circumstances and conditions, i.e. whether you are living comfortably or in poverty. We read in the Qur'ān how Allāh has condemned the Jews in His saying: **'Among the People of the Book there are some who, if you trust them with a heap of gold, will return it to you intact; and there are others who, if you trust them with one dīnār, will not hand it back unless you demand it with importunity; for they say: "We are not bound to keep faith with the illiterate people (or Meccans)"; but they tell lies about Allāh and they know it.'** 3:75. Here Allāh is rebuking them because they say that we have no obligation towards the Gentiles, i.e. non-Jews, and (hence) we can kill them and transgress with their possessions and honour. For them, trust is not fundamental to their legislation, which they falsely and unjustly claimed as part of the Torah; trust is for the Jew only, but with non-Jews they allow that (not keeping the trust). Therefore, if we allow taking the possessions of non-Muslims, what is the difference between our logic and the Jewish one?!

The fourth point: opening up

Try, my beloved (brothers and sisters), to benefit from political, cultural and social conditions in the country to serve your intellectual, political and social causes. Try to open up to people there so that you gain benefit from them for your causes, and even for your intellect in whatever way does not contradict ours. Follow your own circles to prosper, but not in seclusion from the reality around you. Benefit from the freedom there for the sake of your causes: you can obtain permission from the state to protest against those who persecute your people and nation, but observe the law, prohibitions and manners in all that you do.

Try to establish friendships with the officials, so you can explain your causes. And when you live amongst others, try to explain why you have emigrated to that country and what your problems, causes and aspirations are. Respect the people amongst whom you live so that they respect you: **'Treat people in a way similar to that with which you like them to treat you.'** Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) said: **'Be callers for the people without your tongues, so that they see in you truth, goodness and God-fearing, for this is a caller'**, and he said to his *Shī'ah*: **'Behave well to present a good image of us, and do not behave badly and (so) damage our image; thus people say: "O Allāh! Give mercy to Ja'far bin Muḥammad, for he has taught good morals to his followers!"'**

The fifth point: Islam

My beloved (brothers and sisters): when people look upon you as Muslims, you should know that they see Islam's image in yours, therefore, consider how you present Islam's image to them. And when they look upon you as followers of *Ahlul Bayt* (as), they are

seeing *Ahlul Bayt*'s image in yours, so consider how you present *Ahlul Bayt*'s image to them.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): with my mind and heart and love, I proceed with the call to you – whilst you are in your places of expatriation – to be our new Islamic society and our new Islamic movement. Create for Islam a (secure) position out there, whether you stay there – although we do not want you to stay there but would prefer for you to return to your homeland – or not. Try to be callers to Islam and leaders towards it, reading always (as in al-Iftitāh supplication): **'O Lord! We want (you to grant us) a gracious state, in which you make Islam and its people strong, and hypocrisy and its perpetrators humiliated, and to make us callers to your obedience and leaders to your way, and bless us in it (with bounties) with the grace of this life and the Hereafter'**; be callers to Allāh, those who guide others to Him, strugglers in his path.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): your Islam... Your Islam... Your unity... Your unity... Your straightness... Your straightness... This is the call which Allāh wants you to proceed with: **'(As for) those who say: "Our Lord is Allāh", and then, further stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (from time to time): "Fear you not!" (they say), "Nor grieve! But receive the good news of the Paradise that you have been promised!" "We are your guardians in this life and in the Hereafter; therein you shall have all that your souls shall desire; therein you shall have all that you ask for! (A rich provision) from a forgiving and merciful (God)."'** 41:30-32.

Sixth: His Eminence's words of guidance to emigrant youths Switzerland, 11 August 1996

Any movement, from whatever tendency, that opens up to the Iraqi problem – in the whirlwind of which the Iraqi people have been suffering for almost forty years, suffering, offering up martyr after martyr, suffering hunger, deprivation and expulsion until they have become torn from inside and outside (Iraq) – must strive to do something to confront this problem with political, combative, economic or security solutions.

In light of this, we welcome any effort in this direction, but we do not want the Iraqi groups to submerge themselves in their own narrow circles, devoting themselves to the organization (party, group etc) but abandoning the cause, making the organization everything and the cause marginalized.

We want all groups to be loyal to the cause and to regard organization as a mere test run for moving in the line of the cause in a planned way. In this way, we want the Iraqi brothers, who suffer the forced exile, through their families (there), as well as hunger, deprivation and destruction, to know first that the concern of the strugglers for the Iraqi cause in leaving their land is that they have escaped with their religion to Allāh. Therefore, whilst in their place of emigration they should not ignore their religion, nor abandon the restraints and balance demanded by the straight path.

We call upon them to open up to other Islamic groups: if they succeed in unifying with them, this is our hope. However, if they cannot, they must (at least) coordinate their activities so that diversity in the Islamic action for the Iraqi cause does not become a reason for dispute and separation, or for one bringing down the other. We want

them to move forward with one set of plans, even if on coordination level only, and to plan their action, and to pursue the cause, whether through its interior peculiarity or through the regional circles in which it moves, or through the general (outer) circle in which more than one line is linked. They should have Islamic cultural and political awareness, and piety, in all their dynamic endeavours, so that they are God-fearing in themselves, their relationships with others and the cause.

Seventh: His Eminence's words of guidance to the emigrant youths Norway, 23 March 1997

First: I would like all our brothers and sons, especially in the Western places of emigration, to preserve their religion as they do themselves, because the society that they live in might challenge their religion, in the practical aspects of obedience to God and God-fearing, and in the moral aspects which they face in the areas of deviation in that society.

Therefore, they must preserve their religion from all thieves who want to steal it, whether in worship or in aspects of morality and belief. This requires them to come together always to study their religion and to encourage each other with patience in front of the challenges that confront them and the pressures that are imposed upon them.

Second: you have to preserve your children from loss, since Allāh says **'Guard yourselves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones'** 66:6, by preparing atmospheres that enable natural development in the religious field.

Third: you have to be a bright image for Islam, and to ignore anyone who tells you that non-Muslims' possessions are allowable for you (to plunder). You must not harm public order in the country, nor the security of the people, but rather you must be trustworthy as far as people's possessions, blood and security are concerned. You must observe Islam's do's and don'ts in food and drink, work and leisure, for the value of the Muslim derives from the degree of his piety. It was narrated that *Ahlul Bayt* (as) said that one person may be doing a lot of worship but without God-fearing, whilst another may be doing

less worship but with God-fearing: the former is the kind of person who prays and performs the obligations, but if a door to a prohibited thing opens he enters.

The latter, however, is the one who performs his obligations without elaboration, but if a door to a prohibited thing opens he does not enter. The distinction between being God-fearing or not is that when you see doors to prohibited things wide open you observe the don'ts and do not enter it, saying: **'I fear Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds'** 5:28.

Eighth: From his Eminence's words of guidance to emigrants Denmark, 23 November 1997

Try to establish an Islamic 'incubator' for your children. At home, implant in them from the first moments that they start to become aware of life and understand things, the love of Allāh and a feeling for Him, and the love of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) and his progeny (as). Let them get used to Islam – prayer, Islam – the praise of Allāh and the observance of Islam, and Islam – the truth, trust and strength. Talk to them about all this according to their awareness, so that Islam becomes the first seed that you plant inside them. Let the words of Allāh, His Messenger and *Ahlul Bayt* be the words that they hear in the car, the house and every place you go. This is because the upbringing and nurturing (of children) there, to make them live in such an (Islamic) atmosphere, requires a style that is not usual.

You might not fail to notice that one of the best ways of nurturing and bringing up (children) results when the children can learn from the Islamic conduct of their fathers and mothers: the husbands respect their wives and the wives respect their husbands, and there is no lying, swearing or violence. This will supply a role model for the children, and this is the first practical lesson in Islamic education.

Try, as far as you can – and I know how difficult this is – to steer them away from corrupt and aimless atmospheres that have a bad effect on their morals and distance them from the morals which Allāh wants people to adhere to. In a country where children increasingly ask questions about everything that they hear, see or study, try to answer every question, even if it is embarrassing. Do not rebuke them or try to shut them up, as is the custom in your countries, where fathers and mothers do this with their children when they ask them embarrassing questions.

Try to learn how to answer them, how to open their minds and their hearts, for you are in a country where the people respect children's childhood; care for their knowledge and information, and care for them emotionally as well as physically. The *hadīth* of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) says: **'Let whoever has a young boy deal with him on the same mental level.'** So when you talk to your children, try to impersonate them and talk to them as a child talks to another, with the same mentality and language.

Try to make them accustomed to performing prayers with you, lightening the burdens of this with wisdom, so that they can grow in a natural way, open in their minds, hearts and lives.

Before all else, strive to establish schools for the younger generation, in places of expatriation, even before the mosque, because you can pray in a school hall but we might not be able to study in the right manner in a mosque.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): try as far as you can to take care to nurture yourselves, and let no one say that he does not need any (more) education and that he has already learnt the religion well enough, and has absorbed all of Islam's morals, habits and traditions in the lands of Islam, for Satan follows people and tries to get through to them from all sides – front, back, right and left. These are his (Satan's) words to Allāh when the Most High gave him respite for a certain time: **'He said: "Because you have tested me (and I sinned) I will lie in wait for them on your straight path. Then I will assault them from in front of them and from behind them, from their right and their left; you shall not find most of them grateful (to you)."'** 7:16,17.

Satan offers sin to you on a golden plate wherever you are, since there is sin in people's daily routine! Thus, be on your guard, observe yourselves well in all your instincts and desires, and judge yourselves

in whatever you say and indulge in that might bring God's wrath, and in whatever you do that might drive you away from Him.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): in your places of expatriation, try to behave like the person who is surrounded in his house by a lot of thieves who want to steal his children, money and possessions. There are people who want to steal your children, not physically but their belief, and there are people who want to steal from you, not your money but your religion. The thieves of morals, religions, habits and traditions are more dangerous than the money thieves. Try to prepare yourselves against them with more resistance and protection.

Try to get together in guidance and advice meetings to listen to the words of guidance and advice which you find in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger and the good narrations of his progeny, so that you live under Islamic guidance that gets through to your hearts, keeps your minds firm and takes you along the right path. Gather for prayer, for Allāh the Most High has promised to reward in an incalculable manner those who pray in congregations of more than ten people. Anyone can pray at home, but congregational prayer has the meaning and spirit of a group who meet in spiritual atmospheres, but who also will feel the responsibility to meet in general through this spiritual, prayer meeting.

And do not forget supplication after prayer and in occasions of supplication, especially Kumayl's supplication in which all of us live with the Commander of the Faithful (as) in his spiritual prayers to Allāh and with all that Divine love which we feel in him. This is what we need: our relationship with Allāh to be like Ali's relationship with Him, for what 'Alī (as) learnt from the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) was that our love for Allāh must be deep and firm so that we live with Him, think by Him and always observe Him in everything.

Try to live the unity of belief in your unity, and the brotherhood of belief in your brotherhood. Let no one curse another, no one transgress against another, and no one fight another merely because you differ about a matter of life or religion. Instead, try to engage in dialogue, for dialogue is what leads to truth. You must place the private circle in the service of the public one, but not the opposite, and if you do this all of you will win, but if you do the opposite you will lose the overarching public line, and the resulting loss will be huge.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): meeting the obligation of your presence there (in places of expatriation) is to embrace one another and be merciful to each other. Also, be the bright image of Islam and Muslims in their unity so that others feel that you respect your religion, agree on it, respect your Nation and proceed in the service of your causes and homeland, striving to defend it against whoever transgresses against it, whether from the inside or the outside.

You have to bear your responsibility of your presence there, for there are those who are watching you closely, and there are groups opposed to Islam and Muslims who want to seek out your negative and weak points in all that comes from you, so that they can defame you and rally public opinion against you in the places where you live, since there are people who do not want Muslims to live amongst them.

Ninth: His Eminence's words of guidance to his sons
The Netherlands

My beloved (brothers and sisters): Allāh the Most High has put you through a lot of his tests, which were not punishment, but rather a test of your belief, piety and humanity to see how you face up to hard times. Will these hard times be your downfall? Will they drive you away from the right path? Or will they make you resist more and be stronger, firmer, more patient and steadfast in standing with Allāh, His Messenger and His (allegiant) people on the right path?

You were expelled from your country because you said: **'Our Lord is Allāh'**, and because you wanted to keep on the right path by your insistence to be free in your country, strong in your homeland, searching for justice amongst you and for justice in all the dynamics of your land. You sacrificed your childhood playgrounds, your memories of youth and all that you love so that you can worship Allāh and so that you do not submit (to oppression) with humiliation or succumb (to it) like slaves.

Therefore, my beloved (brothers and sisters), my advice to you is what Allāh, His Messenger and the Imams of his progeny have advised us: to open up to Allāh in all of your affairs, to love Him, be loyal to Him and to live in friendship with Him. Sit with Him in a relaxed way! Talk to Him about your pain, dreams, problems and secrets. Talk to Him with warm talk, for He is the Gracious, the Merciful who bestows mercy on his servants even if they err with Him, and who takes care of them even if they go away from Him. Try to live with Allāh in your prayers. Do not ignore your prayer, for it is the ascension of your spirit to Allāh, and do not ignore its spirituality. Try to concentrate on it so that Allāh sees how your prayer proceeds from your hearts before it proceeds from your

bodies. Try to make prayer in the schools to forbid what is wrong (evil) (*nahy 'anil munkar*).

My beloved (brothers and sisters): Try to respond to God through what He wants you to pray for and what He wants you to ask Him, for He says: **'When My servants question you about Me, tell them that I am near, I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he calls to Me; therefore let them answer My call and put their trust in Me, so that they may be rightly guided'** 2:186, and: **'Your Lord has said: "Call on Me and I will answer you."'** 40:60. So God wants you to pray for small as well as big things, in good and bad times, in times of fear and in times of security. Allāh wants you to live with Him in all your causes because He watches you, takes care of you, gently helps you and approaches you whenever you approach Him with your hearts, minds and spirits. And Allāh the Most High wants you to obey Him in small and big things, in good times and bad times.

Be truthful, for God loves truthful people; be trustworthy for God loves trustworthy people; be chaste and pure for Allāh loves chaste and pure people who are not conquered by their desires; Imam 'Alī (as) said: **'The chaste and pure person has become almost an angel!'** And he said: **'The best worship is chasteness and purity that is free of all corruption of the abdomen (i.e. the food you eat) and sexual organ.'** Islam requires all this from you, but if you feel that you have deviated from Allāh by one or two steps, or you have disobeyed Him in this or that matter, repent in a clear and definite way, without letting your sins become a complex: **'Do not despair of Allāh's spirit; none but unbelievers despair of Allāh's spirit'** 12:87; **'He accepts the repentance of His servants, and pardons their sins; and He has knowledge of all your actions'** 42:25; **'Allāh loves those who turn to Him in repentance'** 2:222;

'Say: "O My servants who have sinned against their souls, do not despair of Allāh's mercy, for Allāh forgives all sins; surely He is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful. Turn to your Lord (in repentance) and bow to His (will), before the penalty comes upon you, for after that you can not be helped. And follow the best of (the courses) revealed to you by your Lord, before the penalty comes upon you suddenly, when you perceive it not!"' 39:53-55.

My beloved (brothers and sisters): we want you to present Islam in the best manner, manifesting Islam in your conduct, work, speech, relationships, stances and all your affairs. Be the manifested image of Islam in which one feels that Islam is shining from your mind and heart. **'Be callers for the people not with your tongues, so that they see in you truth, goodness and God-fearing, for this (conduct) is a caller'**, as Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) said. Your presence in these countries, where infidelity exists in the widest of fields, and corruption in all its colours, represents a test for your religion. Do not succumb to all this corruption and debauchery; do not succumb to the persuasions of infidelity and deviation; stay firm in your religion, steadfast in your stances; say **'Our Lord is Allāh'** and keep straight in that, and Allāh will bestow you with strength, steadfastness in spirit, when He knows from you that this is your real intention; Allāh says: **'And those who strive in Our (cause) will certainly guide them to Our paths; and verily Allāh is with those who do right.'** 29:69.

I like to say to Muslim women and young Muslim women that they have, like men, the responsibility of manifesting Islam with all truth, trust, chasteness and purity that is free of all corruption, and straightness, and that they have to carry out the role of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil) and striving for

unity and clinging one and all to the rope (of faith) of Allāh. We want Muslim women to express their humanity, their personality and their selves by being strong, and by not allowing aimless (useless) leisure, which is full of desires, to weaken their religion or stances. We want them to insist on their Islam, Islamic dress, stances, relationships, and in their all concerns and religious adherence. We want believing men and women to seek guidance in Allāh's saying: **'The believers, both men and women, are protectors, one of another; they enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong (evil)'** 9:71.

Tenth: His Eminence's words of guidance during Ramaḍān 1422H 18 November 2001, to emigrants and expatriates in Detroit, America

In this gracious month, the month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'ān was revealed as the guide for mankind, with proofs of His guidance distinguishing right from wrong – in this month, man elevates in his mind to God through the Qur'ān to fill his mind with the bright truth that falsehood can never touch, because it is the truth that has proceeded through the revelation which emphasizes the unity of God as a base for all the Messages of the Prophets (as), and as a springboard from which man can unify all his horizons for opening up to God the Most High, who has created the whole universe and installed it on a foundation of truth, and wants man to be His successor who bears the responsibility of building the earth in the image that God loves in every way. So, the heart proceeds to open up, with every beat, to love, shunning all hatred, enmity or grudges, and life takes its course through man's dynamics in all his private and public concerns, all his relations and stances, and all his words and deeds. All this proceeds with good not evil, with justice not injustice, and with what benefits life not what burdens it.

In this gracious month, a person is renewed in his spirit so that the spirit moves away from all the parasites, complications, sins and dirt that have surrounded it, so as to live in clarity before God the Most High, in a purity like that of springs and in a shining light like the light of the sun.

We need to renew this spirit in every period of our life, especially the time which God specially assigns to Himself and wants to be a time of clarity and purity in which people live to elevate their spirits and to

be nearer to God the Most High. So, my beloved brothers and sisters, we need in this gracious month to look again into everything about our lives, since Imam Zaīn al-'Ābidīn (as) says in his supplication with which he welcomes the month of Ramaḍān: **'It is the month of examination'** in which a person examines all his ideas to rid them off falsehood and to retain only truth, and examines all his heart beats to rid them of any beat of hatred and to keep only love, and examines all his speeches, deeds, stances and relationships to keep in them only what accords with the whole of goodness, the whole of justice, the whole of humanity and the whole of life, because he must always remember that on the morrow he will be standing before God the Most High, alone with no one else: **'On that day each man will forsake his brother, his mother and his father, his wife and his children: for each one of them will on that day have enough concern of his own'** 80:37; **'On the day when every soul will come pleading for itself'** 16:111, **'(it will be) the day when no soul shall have power (to do) anything for another; and the command that day will be (wholly) with Allāh.'** 82:19. This imposes on him the obligation to make his soul, which will face God on the morrow in that difficult position, free from all that burdens it and all that distorts its image before God the Most High. He must carry out a process of searching and a process of accounting, so that he arrives before God having succeeded in returning his soul to the instinctual foundation on which God has created him: **'Allāh's creation cannot be changed; this is surely the right faith'** 30:30.

Imam Zaīn al-'Ābidīn (as) says that this month is the month of purity in which one lives the purity of mind, heart, spirit, senses, feelings, the purity of position and stance, the purity of speech and style, and the purity of relationships; thus one becomes distant from all material

and immaterial dirt, because they burden one's insight and all one's aspirations and all one's life dynamics. Imam Zain al-'Ābidīn (as) says also that this is the month of Qur'ān, because it is the month in which God wants people to live the whole of Islam, furthering cultural Islam through continuous reciting that focuses thoughts on the idea by focusing on the word, and focuses thoughts on the meaning through thinking about – and developing a feeling for – the verse. This is because God wants us to apply to the Qur'ān a reading of deep thinking, in which our minds and hearts open up to the facts of the Qur'ān, so that we are educated by the Qur'ān in belief, jurisprudence, approach and dynamic movement; in this way, we will know that the Qur'ān guides us towards gentleness, not towards violence, except in cases where violence is directed against those who impose violence on life and humanity, in the manner that God the Most High accepts. Also, we know through the Qur'ān that Islam is the religion of dialogue, which means that it meets with others who differ from it on the basis of dialogue, so that this dialogue becomes a mind-to-mind dialogue, and a heart-to-heart dialogue, and the dialogue of a person in his humanity with another person in his humanity; a dialogue that does not deny others, but opens up to others so as to arrive, through the companionship of research, at the truth, understanding, and approach, or at unity. Thus, dialogue can make a person live his humanity in the humanity of another – in the humanity of his mind, heart and the whole of his life.

Let us read in the Qur'ān how to meet with others on the basis of the common ground: **'Say: "O people of the Book, let us come to a common word (agreement) between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh, that we will associate none with Him and none of us shall set up mortals as deities besides Allāh"'** 3:64; and His saying: **'And do not argue with the People of the**

Book, **except with the best means (of arguing), and except with those among them who commit evil (injustice); and say: "We believe in that which is revealed to us and which was revealed to you: our God and your God is one; to Him we surrender ourselves'** 29:46; and: **'we discriminate against none of His apostles'** 2:285; and: **'you believe in the entire Book'** 3:119. Let's reach out to all religions to meet with them in the one God and in our common spiritual and moral values, and to look to the positive points in the others, in the same way that God the Most High talks to us about Christians: **'and that the nearest in affection to them (the Muslim believers) are those who say: "We are Christians;" that is because there are priests and monks amongst them, and because they are free from (arrogant) pride'** 5:82; in this way we can stay in complete awareness about what is and who is around us. And we read in the Holy Qur'ān: **'Allāh enjoins justice and doing favours'** 16:90; **'Do not allow your hatred for other men to turn you away from justice; deal justly; that is nearer to true piety'** 5:8; and we read: **'O believers, conduct yourselves with justice and bear true witness before Allāh, even though it be against yourselves'** 4:135; and: **'A good deed and a bad deed are not equal; repel (the bad deed) with whatever (behaviour) is better, and treat him with whom you share enmity as if he is a dearest friend.'** 41:34. This last verse says to us: 'Choose the approach that makes your enemies into friends, and be friends to the world so that the world becomes a friend to you, your causes, religion, homelands and humanity.' Thus we also read: **'Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation and reason with them in the most courteous manner'** 16:125, and **'Say to my servants that they should say those things that are best'** 17:53.

And if the Qur'ān talks about violence, it is violence confronting violence: **'Fight in the way of Allāh those that fight against you'** 2:190, and **'And how should you not fight in the way of Allāh, and for the oppressed?'** 4:75. Therefore, *jihād* in Islam is not an aggressive action against man, but a defensive and pre-emptive one, as violence is in all religious and non-religious civilizations. We understand from the Holy Qur'ān that we have to open up to dialogue of civilizations not a clash of civilizations.

God the Most High wants us, in this gracious month, to live with Him in a process of spiritual mobilization so that we meet and open up to Him in all our pains, dreams, problems and private and public issues, and ask for His mercy in all this, and His discreet help in all this, His help in confronting our desires with what He loves and accepts, and ask Him to bestow on our lives peace of the mind, heart, spirit and life, and to guide us towards manifesting the brotherhood of the believers: **'The believers are (only) a band of brothers'** 49:10, and towards holding fast in Allāh and to the rope of Allāh that unifies us: **'And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh (which He stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves'** 3:103.

And so the supplication, which God wishes to be the rope extending between the heavens and earth, proceeds. God invites us to pray to Him in all our causes: **'Your Lord has said: "Call on Me and I will answer you."'** 40:60, and: '**I am near, I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he calls to Me.' 2:186**.

And so, my beloved, the blessed month of Ramaḍān is the month of spiritual mobilization, with supplication, prayers and praise (of God) with *tasbīḥ* (saying '*subḥān Allāh*'), *taḥmīd* (saying '*al-ḥamdu lillāh*), *tahlīl* (saying '*la ilāha illa Allāh*') and *takbīr* (saying '*Allāhu akbar*'), which is the ascension of the believer's spirit to God. God wants us to fast in

this month – to fast during the day and pray during the night – so as to confirm the strength of our will with which we proceed in the fasting during the days of Ramadān, abandoning food, drink and sex, and so that through this we can practise the greater fasting, which is abandoning throughout our entire life all the food, drink, desires, relationships, words etc that God the Most High prohibits; for the smaller fasting prepares us to be strong (enough) to practise the greater fasting.

The month of Ramaḍān is the month of mind, spirit and will, so that one proceeds through all this to be a person who flies with two wings - awareness and God-fearing – to meet with God. The Commander of the Faithful (as) said, regarding the *'Eid* of *Fiṭr*: **'It is the *'Eid* only for whom Allāh Has accepted his fasting and prayers'**, and: **'Every day in which you do not disobey Allāh is *'Eid*.'**

O my beloved: this month calls upon you to make the effort to rid yourself of the burdens that have accumulated from your sins, deviations etc. If a person repents with a firm and resolute and sincere repentance, God accepts his repentance and forgives (cancels) his sin, and he becomes –through repentance – like he was on the day he was born.

Try to open up to love between yourselves, to unity among yourselves and to doing good among yourselves. Try to live as one family – thinking about your common causes, your common concerns and your common problems. In so doing, you gain strength and power to confront and to solve all ills.

O my beloved: I have talked to you more than once over many years, and said to you brethren in other places of emigration that your responsibility in your place of emigration is to preserve the peace and security of the country in which you reside, and to preserve all that keeps its balance, and where this relates to people's possessions not

to harm them, or people's honour not to harm it, or people's blood (souls) not to harm it, be these people Muslims or non-Muslims; God the Most High says: **'Allāh does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for (your) religion, nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them; for Allāh loves those who are just. But He forbids you to make friends with those who have fought against you on account of your religion and driven you from your homes or abetted others to drive you out; those that make friends with them are wrongdoers.'** 60:8,9.

O my beloved: you came to a country that embraced you and hosted you well, and provided you with jobs, education and a dignified life, therefore you must reciprocate favour with favour, security with security and good with good. And when we deal with all this, we must know that, with regard to the tragic events (11/09/2001 explosions) that took place in the United States of America, which killed a lot of innocent civilian people, Americans and otherwise, we were the first to condemn it hours after it happened. We said that this is unacceptable to any mind, law or religion, and that our differences with or opposition to the policies of the American administration in some of our causes could not justify us to commit any terrorist act against the American people or those resident in America or those visiting it, because this is a matter that does not conform to any Islamic value, since we are not in a 'hot' war with them, which is how some people have sought to justify it.

Your responsibility, whilst living in these countries, is to live with your people in peace, security and mutual respect, and (to make) people feel that you exchange with them all good and love.

We reject all terrorist acts that relate to harming the security of people in general, especially innocent civilians. Therefore, my advice is that you be good, gracious guests.

Questions from, and dialogues with, emigrants and expatriates

First: Questions from the Islamic Group of America and Canada Youth 18th Conference, 27 December 1997

Q1 – What is the role of Muslims in dealing with Western civilization: negative or positive? And what is the role of the Islamic Group as an institution and that of individuals?

A – One of the first conditions for Muslims present in the West is to preserve the Islamic base in their thinking, conditions and activities (work and otherwise), so that the pious, worshipping, believing Islamic individual stays with the original elements of belief and good deeds, and so that Muslims do not dissolve in the society there by abandoning Islam's values and opening up to the West's values, especially regarding the freedoms which might clash with many of Islam's obligations.

Hence, I regard these groups, such as the Islamic Group of America and Canada Youth, which have succeeded in preserving their originality and freedom from any deviation, and have lived through all these years without succumbing to the many challenges that they have faced – such young groups should always have the support of all Muslims to integrate with them, strengthen their course and give them new spirit and new blood, so that they can continue in their Islamic endeavour.

Muslims must establish – wherever they may be in the West – a lot of Islamic positions, 'incubators' and schools in which (their children) can grow in a natural way that is open to all richness of Islam and its knowledge of life. You must preserve the strength of

your religious adherence, because emigration and presence in a country where religion weakens (to the extent of) making a person *a'rābiyy* (one who has left a Muslim land for non-Muslim land) is forbidden.

I, therefore, call upon all my brothers and sons, Muslim men and women, to integrate to establish these Islamic centres and not to promote the partisanships and selfishness of one centre set against another, but rather to integrate in their centres providing them with an Islamic, unselfish character.

As for our stance in relation to Western civilization, there is a materialistic dimension there that does not observe God in its outlook, and a social and political philosophy that differs from our philosophy. Therefore, we must study this materialistic dimension, which disregards and abandons the spiritual dimension, and this philosophical dimension, which submerges man's existence in issues of freedom, without regard for the other elements and dimensions that might negatively affect some of its freedoms.

We have to take care of the intellectual, spiritual aspects in our relationship with Western civilization so that we do not become dissolved and submerged in it, and so become distant from our Islam when we move inside our societies. However, we can look to this civilization in a positive way through its achievements in science and its knowledge of the secrets of the Universe that it has uncovered and in the development of scientific matters in response to man's needs.

We can enrich our experience inside these societies by adopting many of the positive points and achievements of this civilization in the realms of science and knowledge. The criterion that governs our presence there is the need to preserve our originality as

Muslims who want to benefit from other people's experiences in knowledge, science and issues of reality, on condition that we do not succumb to the influence of these societies in its un-Islamic concepts and pagan habits, but that we have an independent presence that is open to all of man's issues, in a way which regards the differences between peoples and nations as a means of becoming acquainted and integrated with them, and of exchanging expertise, and not as a path leading to separation and hatred.

We have to be friends of the West in issues of freedom, justice, science and knowledge; for our problem with the West is not with its people, but with its official administrations that want to control our resources, capabilities and decisions about politics and security.

Q2 – Is current Islamic speech in need of a new outlook to make it conform to the era?

A – Islamic speech represents the development in knowledge of the Muslim in his reality dynamics, for it represents his aspirations to change his actions in order to change reality. We must proceed with Islamic speech according to the needs of the contemporary person, and move dynamically in the Islamic, belief-related, (Islamic) legal approach and dynamic concepts, so that the contemporary person feels that the speech represents his era, needs and the issues of his life and its course. (Islamic) speech should not be abstract, overindulgent in imagination, nor past-bound, which makes it remote from the issues of our era and contemporary life.

In light of this, Islamic speech must bear the anxieties of research and respond to man's needs and to Islamic rulings and concepts

that deal with his needs and solve his problems in the dynamics of the era. Those who are involved in the dynamics of this speech must always be aware of the particulars that govern it and the sensitivities facing man. As an example, there is an arrogant crusade against dynamic Islam which appears under the title of 'fundamentalism', and which carries within it a historic Western concept of disregarding others (non-Christians) and regarding violence as the only means to achieve results. And through the lack of awareness of some Muslims about this arrogant war, they might use violence and means which do indeed disregard others, and thereby fulfil the prejudices of the Western concept towards dynamic Islamists.

Islamists must be careful in the terminology and particulars of this speech, so that they deny their enemies the weapon with which to fight us. We must say to the world that Islam does not disregard others (non-Muslims), but rather recognises them and co-exists with them. This is what His saying states: **'Say; "O people of the Book, let us come to a common word (agreement) between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh, that we will associate none with Him and none of us shall set up mortals as deities besides Allāh."'** 3:64.

Islamic society formerly co-existed with Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. This is why followers of these religions stayed within the Islamic society without compulsion, and Muslims did not attempt to disregard their presence, or to expel them from the Islamic arena.

We can, in light of the word 'common' (in the above verse), open up to other tendencies that we encounter politically, culturally or economically, and live with these under the 'common word',

which represents the common ground between us and them. We should tell the others (non-Muslims) that Islam is not a religion that considers violence as the basis for its dynamic development, but rather the basis is, and this is seen in the Most High's saying: **'A good deed and a bad deed are not equal; repel (the bad deed) with whatever (behaviour) is better, and treat him with whom you share enmity as if he is a dearest friend'** 41:34, which calls for gentle and kind approach towards others, and (calls us) to transform our enemies to friends. Islam tells us that, when we differ with other people, we must do so on the basis of reason and proof: **'Say: "Produce your proof if you are truthful"'** 2:111, and **'And do not argue with the People of the Book, except with the best means (of arguing)'** 29:46, and **'And certain it is that either we or you are have the right guidance or are in evident error.'** 34:24.

Islam is a religion that calls for dialogue and co-existence, and dynamically moves to open man's mind and heart to truths in the simplest way. Therefore, we must present this image about Islam, and when we deal with the issue of violence, we have to do so using a civilized logic that gives a person the right to defend himself and protect his arena from aggression.

We have to say to them that Muslims do not try to instigate violence for the sake of violence or because of a complex against others, but on the basis of defending themselves against the occupier, and against those who want to erase their presence and freedom, and when there is no way possible for gentleness violence becomes the (essential) surgical operation to which one resorts to protect life. We have to follow all challenges of the reality to make Islamic speech harmonize with the dynamics of reality – in its mentality, issues and challenges. Also, we have to

distance it from myths, abstraction and backwardness, and to differentiate between believing in the unknown and giving freedom to myths that infiltrate our minds in the name of the unknown, for the unknown has its foundations and rules and God has established them on the basis of His norms (*sunan*). (Of course) discreet (and unseen) help (and interference) continues to be present in many respects, but this does not mean that we should explain everything according to it, and deny the norms of Allāh in the Universe, which He wants to see move through the natural laws that He has put in it.

Muslims, whether Islamic Jurists, activists or intellectuals, must live in concert with their times, understand the people and issues of their day and talk using the language of the age, through Islam's point of view, and not talk only about issues of the past, for Islam has its solutions for every age, and each according to the level and size of its needs and problems.

Q3 – You are known to always emphasize the role of women in life. Can a woman carry out her work in a normal way if she eases the restraints of the *ḥijāb*?

A – In Islam, women are human beings with full humanity in their mental capacity and personality, as well as in their public and private responsibilities. Allāh wants women to integrate with men, and believing men to integrate with believing women: **'The believers, both men and women, are protectors, one of another; they enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong (evil)'** 9:71, so as to confront the challenges of reality with all that the words 'good' and 'wrong (evil)' imply. Women, thus, should bear responsibility in confronting the challenges like men.

Regarding easing (the restraints of) the *ḥijāb* in expatriate countries, women must strive with all their power to preserve their *ḥijāb* since these countries give people freedom to dress as they please. Some women – as do some men – imagine that (other) people oppress them and look at them in a negative way on account of some of their religious obligations, so they succumb to the influence of their illusions and the image which they themselves draw about people's feelings towards them. The person must look to his own conscience concerning the imaginations with which he justifies his abandoning the line of Islamic adherence. That said, things may become too difficult for a person – man or woman – to bear, and in such cases (only) they may ease their religious adherence, these being cases of compulsion (*ḥaraj*), danger (*khaṭar*) or harm (*ḍarar*), but only to the minimum extent that is needed.

Q4 – A lot of people of the Islamic Group have attained great scientific capabilities in these countries. What do you say to them, taking account of the fact that a lot of them cannot return to their countries because of the oppressive regimes there?

A – What I would like (for) our (people with) scientific and cultural capabilities is to go to Islamic countries to enrich the experience (of those countries). However, the difficult circumstances, which a lot of our educated and knowledgeable youth face, prevent them from finding the natural opportunities to put their scientific and cultural experience into practice, or they find that the opportunity to be freely active in their countries is non-existent.

It is possible for them to stay in these countries on condition that their stay enables them to broaden their scientific experience, and also if it is a dynamic stay that preserves the Islamic presence in the West – so that they can serve Muslims in the West if they cannot serve them in the East.

Our brothers should always investigate objective circumstances that may provide the opportunity to return to their countries. If such opportunity arises, I call upon them to return. However, if difficulties remain, they can stay in order to add to their scientific, cultural and dynamic experience.

Second: Questions (over the telephone) from the Muslim Youth League London, UK

Q1 – How, in raising our children can we find the right balance, between teaching them the *Ahlul Bayt* school of thought and their harmony and interaction with our Sunni brothers?

A – We can teach them the Shi'ite Islamic school of thought according to the method which Imam aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) indicated in his saying to his *Shī'ah*: **'Behave well to provide a good image of us, and do not behave badly and (so) damage our image, so that people say: "O Allāh! Give mercy to Ja'far bin Muḥammad, for he has taught good morals to his followers!"'**

And when they asked him: 'How should we deal with the people from our community who do not believe in what we believe in?' he answered them: **'Pray in their congregation and follow their dead (to the cemetery) so that they say: "O Allāh! Give mercy to Ja'far bin Muḥammad, for he has taught good morals to his followers!"'** Therefore, we must teach our children that there is a general Islamic line in which we meet with all Muslims, and this is believing in Allāh, His Messenger, the Day of Judgement, His angels and His Messengers. We have to emphasize the common ground between us and other Muslims in our children's awareness, in a way that does not implant in our children a complex against other Muslims; this is through emphasis on adhering to the allegiance line (*wilāyah*) with all its obligations.

The question is how we should apply the method with which we present the idea, since Allāh teaches us: **'Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation and reason**

with **them in the most courteous manner'** 16:125, and His saying: **'Say to my servants that they should say those things that are best'** 17:53.

Q2 – Is the (Muslim) who works in Western countries allowed to participate in the parties which companies hold at the New Year and on other occasions, where both (men and women) allowed and prohibited drinks are served?

A – It is not allowed to be present in such celebrations, not because alcoholic drinks are served but because at such parties morals are largely ignored (as far as Islamic morals are concerned), thus distancing the person from Allāh the Most High. Exceptions can be made in cases where abstention from attending (the party) will cause great harm (*ḍarar*), but here they (the participants) must keep to the necessary minimum.

Q3 – We are a group of Muslim youth who do not have an enthusiastic spirit for Islam or for the cause of Imam al-Mahdī (as). What is your advice to us?

A – An aware Muslim youth is one who knows the role of belief in Imam al-Mahdī (as) in our lives. Allāh the Most High chose Imam al-Mahdī as the person to bring about disseminate comprehensive universal justice, to fill the earth with justice after it had been filled with injustice. We have to believe in his Imamate and to open up to his era when Allāh wanted to bestow on us (the chance) to be part of his soldiers and followers. However, in this period of time when we are separated from him, we have to know that we are Muslims who bear all Islam's obligations on all levels: individual, social, cultural, political, security-related and economic.

Imam al-Mahdī (as), after whom 'justice' became the title of his era, wants us to stand in every position for justice and leadership of justice, and to stand up against any unjust leadership and any unjust position. Relaxing while waiting for him and becoming secluded from reality makes us emphasize that the Imam's cause is not personal, for he is one of the twelve Imams (as) and the successor of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) in his Message, and (also makes us emphasize) that his Imamate moves through his actual presence.

Those who deny the (need for the) dynamics of the call, revolution and struggle endeavours in the struggle using as an excuse such words as 'Keep to the ground until our Awaited Imam starts his movement', do not understand the meaning of Imam al-Mahdī (as), nor the message-bound character of Islam, nor that it, with all its belief, rulings, approach and dynamics, has been revealed to all mankind, since God sent His Prophet (sawa) until the Day of Judgement. So, there is no (time when we are relieved from) our message-derived responsibilities on both private and public levels.

Some may speak according to: **'Allāh does not place a greater burden on any soul than it can bear'** 2:286, or **'Allāh does not place burden on any soul more than what He has given it'** 65:7. All these probabilities have to be studied realistically, without fear of psychological defeat or love for relaxing and abandoning the reality of the conflict.

Q4 – Is marriage for a certain benefit – such as when a man marries a woman to obtain nationality of that country – allowed?

A - In principle, it is not forbidden, but it is not morally correct.

Third: Questions from brother Abū Jihād al-Ḥusaīniyy
Sweden, 8 July 1996

Q1 – What is the Islamic obligation of women in places of emigration?

A – A woman must have a strong link with Allāh, preserve her *ḥijāb* and her religious adherence, and refrain from rushing to adopt certain types of freedom that the law may grant her to rebel against her husband, or to move away from Islamic marital obligations. A pious, believing person does not commit forbidden things even if the doors to forbidden things are wide open, and not to accept forbidden things even if they are presented on a golden plate.

Q2 – What is your opinion regarding fathers who have marriageable daughters in places of emigration?

A – It is natural that he (the father) should try to find her a husband who protects her religion, humanity and honour. I believe that fathers have the responsibility to search for husbands for their daughters, just as they search for wives for their sons.

Q3 – A Muslim married a woman from the People of the Book (Jew or Christian), but she kept her religion. What is the Islamic ruling?

A – He has to prohibit her from some prohibited things, such as drinking alcohol or eating pork; he has to treat her well; and she must be clean in her body.

Q4 – And her dress?

A – He must make the *ḥijāb* obligatory for her, so that she harmonizes with his Islamic atmospheres, for otherwise this might bring harm to him as a believer and to his children in the future and to his Islamic social atmosphere.

Q5 – In the West, children's education includes sexual education. Do we, Muslims, have a way by which we can teach our children about these matters?

A – The method is related to the approach used to bring them up. When Islam talks about sexual organs, in the Qur'ān and in Islamic jurisprudence, it does not see any shortcoming in this as a matter of principle. Therefore, we see that there is no problem with (providing) sexual education, on condition that this is carried out in a scientific way that does not raise curiosity in the children's minds to practise it and does not instil in them feelings that are unhealthy or complex way.

Q6 – What is your advice to fathers and mothers regarding what their teenage children see on TV?

A – The TV represents a cultural means, just as it represents a means for deviation. Therefore, they must distance themselves and their children from any deviant content on TV and link them to whatever can strengthen their minds and their public and private lives: **'O Believers, guard your selves and your family against a Fire fuelled with men and stones.'** 66:6.

Q7 – Some sermon-givers in Ḥusaīniyy pulpits slander others in the pulpit; what is the Islamic stance in such cases?

A – The Nation has to stop these (slanderers) from getting into the pulpits and has to discourage them, because they harm Islam

and Muslims in the name of al-Ḥusaīn (as), for this is a matter that the Nation has a responsibility for. I declare it forbidden for anyone to use the Ḥusaīniyy pulpit for this purpose.

Q8 – What is your advice to the youths who emigrated after the Sha'bāni uprising (in Iraq, 1991) to Scandinavian countries especially, and given that some of them have joined secular movements?

A – I like to speak to our Iraqi brothers in the same way that I speak to all my Muslim brothers who are active in the international Islamic movement: If they want to abandon the dynamic framework of the Islamic line, why do they emigrate from their country? They can practise secularism in their country, one way or another. I believe that the tyrannical regime has no problem with any secular line which lacks the warmth of confrontation, as we notice in a lot of secular individuals who have no problem in responding to the democratic call that Saddam is raising, were it not for shyness (embarrassment) and some political complexities outside (Iraq).

Therefore, if they want to withdraw from the Islamic movement, why have they emigrated? And if they do not believe in the Islamic movement, do they believe in the secular movements?! Or is it only that they are searching for any group in which they want to live, since the international atmosphere incubates secularism more and sees danger in Islam?

Therefore, I say to my brothers: when you open up to any movement, try not to study the profit and loss in materialistic terms, for you can never be dynamic activists – whether Islamic or

secular – in this field, but only merchants who are trying to reap the same amount as they give on a materialistic level!

A person who respects himself, his homeland and his nation is one that dynamically moves from intellectual conviction in whatever is the saviour for himself, his homeland and his nation, both in this life and the Hereafter. Thus, such people must make a responsible stand with themselves, their homeland and their nation. And if some people talk about the shortcomings present in the Islamic movements, we have to understand that these movements are not a possession of the current leaderships, or of those of tomorrow, but rather they are a possession for the whole Nation, and one must not withdraw from the movement – if one believes in its principles – simply because there are problems and deviations inside it, but one must continue from one's position in the movement to repair what can be repaired and to continue the process of criticism in an objective way in which words do not transform into irresponsible words that are an outlet for a grudge rather than a solution to the problem.

Q9 – Some religious Muslims ridicule the Islamic movement in Iraq, which has honourable history and many martyrs, and the Iraqi prisons are still full of the sons of this movement; and it was the first Islamic movement established in Iraq.

A – The problem for a lot of people, including the religious, is that they live out their negative characteristics in their aspirations for man's reality; even if the Prophet (sawa) was present now, they would still be the group who would try to justify their withdrawal from the battle, just as the Qur'ān speaks of them: **'They say: "Our homes are defenceless", whereas they are not, (but) they only wished to flee'** 33:13. They want to keep their (selfish)

individuality and want 'self-Islam' that allows them to relax (whilst) it brings them good results. Therefore, they are ready to be with Islam when it serves their interests, but if it contradicts their interests they are ready to drop it, justifying this with all means that they regard as legal. Thus, they are against any Islamic movement, and against any activity of struggle (*jihād*), and against even those who say: 'Keep to the ground until our Awaited Imam starts his movement'. They want to rid Islam of all its historical movement so that it remains as a dynamic movement in the first stage of the Message (only). They will, therefore, freeze themselves until Islam becomes (once again) a dynamic movement at the end of time, in the same way as some poets say – and as some Ḥusaīniyy sermon-givers say:

War has stopped

And (the family of) Hāshim said: (we are waiting for) the start of al-Mahdī's movement.

These people live outside the framework of history, time and man's movement to achieve freedom. They may justify this for themselves superficially or even realistically, but we would like to say to them, with all love: it is your right to think as you like, but do not reject the idea of reality; you have to understand reality and Islam through the words of Allāh and His Messenger (sawa); try to get to know the dynamics of good and evil in the reality of life and the reality of man; try to think about public issues as you do private issues; try at least to engage in dialogue with those people who think in their own way, so that you (may) persuade them with your own way (of thinking).

Being (sitting) on top of the hill is like the man who said: 'Prayer with 'Alī is better, and eating with Mu'āwiyah is more delicious, and sitting on top of the hill (during the battle) is safer!' And there

is a narration that Imam al-Kāḍhim (as) said: **'Convey a good thing or say a good thing, and do not be an *imma'ah*.'** So they asked him: 'What is the *imma'ah*?' He replied: **'(When) you say: "I am with the people and I am part of the people;" (for) they are two paths: a good path and an evil path, so do not let the evil path become more likeable to you than the good path'.** And 'Alī's advice in his will to al-Ḥasan and al-Husaīn (as): **'Be an opponent to the unjust and a support to the oppressed.'** This neutrality means indifference to the situation, (whilst the correct stance) must be with the right against falsehood, and with the oppressed against the unjust.

Q10 – What is our Islamic duty towards our country when we are thousands of kilometres away from it?

A – Your duty is to support your country's cause in all your private and public relationships, and to educate the society in which you live about the tragic and political issues of your country. You should strive to help the impoverished and oppressed people and the impoverished and oppressed Iraqi people, in every way you can. You should continue your course, and be loyal to whoever stays in the arena, with all your power and capabilities. You should meet your obligations towards Islam and Muslims in your country with all your power and energy, and each according to his own power and energy.

Chapter 8

Emigration Jurisprudence

(A) Following the Grand Islamic Jurists (*at-Taqlīd*)

(B) Emigration and Religion

(C) Purity and Impurity (*At-Ṭahārah wan-Najāsah*)

(D) Prayer (*Aṣ-Ṣalāt*)

(E) Food and Drink

(F) Dress and Appearance

(G) Man and Woman

(H) Marriage and Divorce

(I) Money Matters

(J) Trade-related Matters

(K) Music and Singing

(L) Medical Matters

(M) Miscellaneous Issues

(N) Living in non-Muslim countries

(O) Propagating Islam (*At-Tablīgh/ad-da'wah*)

(P) Politics

Emigration Jurisprudence

(A) Following the Grand Islamic Jurists (*at-Taqlīd*)

A1 – Who takes care of answering directly the **questions that are presented to you**, of any kind?

A – I supervise questions (and answers) bearing my signature. We have an enquiries office (*maktab istiftā'*), whose staff know my rulings and try to answer the questions according to these rulings, and in the end no answer to any *fatwā* gets signed – whether for a jurisprudence *fatwā* or otherwise – before I read it and sign it directly (myself).

A2 – I follow Sayyid al-Kho'iyy, and would like to follow you in your ruling that I can stay in his following and also take new rulings from you. Do you allow switching to your Eminence without condition?

A – My opinion is that both switching and staying are allowed, even if the dead (Grand Islamic Jurist – *marji'*) was more knowledgeable. In light of this, switching is allowed without condition.

A3 – We would like a brief concerning your opinion regarding ***tab'iḍ* (following more than one Grand Islamic Jurists simultaneously)**: does it mean that any person may open any practical ruling book (*risālah 'amaliyyah*) of a Grand Islamic Jurist (*mujtahid*) and follow his ruling, whether he is alive or dead, or of early or more recent times? And is it allowed for anyone to use *tab'iḍ, or* is it a condition that this is allowed through a ruling of the Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*) whom he follows?

A – *Tab'īḍ* must be the ruling of the Grand Islamic Jurist who is followed, so the ruling is allowed to be thus affected. Moreover, *tab'īḍ* is not allowed in questions for which the rulings are obtained from a dead Grand Islamic Jurist (*marji'*), because our ruling is that it is an obligatory precaution (*iḥtiyāṭ wājib*) not to follow a dead *marji'* at the start, whether in *tab'īḍ* or otherwise. And even when we declare our ruling in *tab'īḍ*, this is not to be done haphazardly, but it must be used for a thing which a person needs. For example, our ruling is that smoking is forbidden because it is harmful and everything harmful to the body is forbidden, but there are a lot of scholars who do not see that because they see a forbidden harm as one which leads to death. Some people have become used to smoking and they claim they cannot abandon it, and yet they follow us. To these people I say that they can follow other *marji'* in this matter. However, there are many sensitive matters for which I do not allow *tab'īḍ*, so *tab'īḍ* does not transform from permission to a game in which the sanctity of the *fatwā* becomes dishonoured.

A4 – Those who live in distant countries, and for whom the **practical guide of rulings (*ar-risālah al-'amaliyyah*)** is not easily accessible, what should they do regarding *taqlīd* (following an Grand Islamic Jurist) and new questions?

A – If they cannot contact a Jurist, they must abide by the precautionary rulings if they can, or they must choose (what to do) if they cannot abide by the precautions.

(B) Emigration and Religion

B1 – Is it allowed for the believer to **travel to non-Muslim countries** if he is certain that this will not negatively affect his religion and the religion of those related to him?
A – It is allowed.

B2 – What is the ruling for the **wife who is certain that travelling** with her husband will lead to a **weakening of her religion**?
A – In that case, accompanying him is not obligatory because travelling will become forbidden for her. However, the matter must be studied according to each particular case.

B3 – And how about **travelling for sons and daughters** who have reached puberty (i.e. Islamic legal age) – with their father, mother or friends, for instance – if **their travel will lead to a weakening of their religion**?
A – The ruling is the same as the ruling for the last question.

B4 – What meaning do you give for the **'weakening of religion'**?
A – What is meant is that their religious adherence or awareness descends to a level at which they might abandon doing obligatory things, or commit forbidden things, or all or some of their concepts all change with the result that they become distanced from Islam's concepts concerning belief, the *Shari'ah* and life in general.

B5 – Is it obligatory for the emigrant Muslim residing in a non-Muslim country to **return to a Muslim country** if he knows that staying where he is will lead to a weakening of his religion or of that of his children?

A – He must emigrate to a Muslim country or any country where he can preserve his religion.

B6 – If the emigrant **Muslim feels a weakening of his religion** in his place of emigration, **but does not leave** it for another country where he can preserve it, would he be regarded as one who has undertaken a **sinful travel (*safar ma'ṣiyah*)**?

A – (The term) *safar ma'ṣiyah* means that his travel was forbidden from the start, since it would lead to forbidden things, but in this case (in this question) it is his residence that is sinful.

B7 – Is it regarded as a weakening of his religion if the emigrant **abandons his original homeland** or the country where Islamic atmospheres have been available, **with all the charity work and other activities** that contribute to the building of his personality and that of his family regarding religion?

A – We do not regard this on its own as a weakening in religion, especially if he is able to perform this (charity work and other activities) in his place of emigration through the Islamic atmospheres which he founds there or to whose founding he contributes. However, his residence in an Islamic country is better if emigration is not necessary.

B8 – Residents in Europe, America and other Western countries of emigration **may commit forbidden acts** which they might not have committed if they had stayed in their Muslim country; is this regarded as a weakening of religion that, as a consequence, leads to a prohibition of their residing there?

A – If this happens in such a way that they lose their choice and so cannot activate their will regarding (religious) adherence, travelling (to these places of emigration) is not allowed.

B9 – Is it obligatory on the person living in Western countries to strive to **teach his children the Arabic language**, given that ignorance in it leads to ignorance in the main sources of the *Shari'ah*, which are written in Arabic, and leads to a reduction in their religious knowledge and, as a consequence, a weakening of their religion?
A – This is obligatory on him, since not learning the Arabic language may drive Muslims away from guidance in the sources of knowledge and religious education, which will, consequently, lead to a weakening of religion.

B10 – Some Muslim **fathers in the West resort to secluding their children from society** for fear of their deviation, and so they prevent them from working or going to clubs to practise their hobbies. Is this correct? Or what is the correct stance in your opinion? What is the best way to ensure their mixing with society without running the risk of deviation?
A – These fathers may be faithful in this approach, since they feel that society, in its deviation, is more powerful than the atmosphere that they live in the Islamic line. However, we say to these fathers, and others, that keeping a person from experience makes him weaker, because when he comes out from this atmosphere and enters another he may not be strong enough to cope with that other experience.
Thus, if we have been forced to go to the West with our children, we should prepare cultural and spiritual 'incubators' in addition to Islamic schools, even if the cost has to come out of our daily food,

for the matter is not that we may make materialistic gains for our children, but that we may lose them religiously and spiritually. We have to nurture our children, strengthen their faith and take care of them, and choose for them (the right) openings to positions and experiences, in order to provide them with some strength of personality in the dynamics of experience under our care.

B11 – I am a refugee in Sweden and have been living there for a long time. Lately I have found that my staying there will lead to the deviation of my children. I have **decided to leave** Sweden, but **my wife does not accept** this; what should I do?
A – You must convince her and make her leave that country for another place where atmospheres are available in which the religion and Islamic adherence of you, her and your children can be protected. She has to abide by this, since a wife must follow her husband in such a case, provided that she has not made living in a certain place a condition of the (marriage) contract.

B12 – What are the Islamic criteria regarding **what can and cannot be used on the internet web** when it is question of material with different uses, and when many different things are shown on it: culture, lessons, education, strengthening the religion and the like, and leisure and the like, as well as obscenity, verbal abuse directed towards Muslim scholars and the right school of thought, temptations towards forbidden desires, even actually succumbing to them, and the like? What is the general criteria regarding allowing or forbidding in these matters?
A- The criteria is that if (the sites or pages) surfed through lead towards forbidden things, or to a weakening of belief or of moral immunity, or lead to dishonouring the believers or the scholars, or

strengthening the forces of disorder and evil, or to failing to meet the Islamic duties for the Muslim towards himself and his family, and the like (then this is not allowed); but benefiting from the internet to enrich the mind, intellect and spirit is something that is allowed, and indeed is commendable.

B13 – Should some **internet pages be viewed** according the ruling on **books of deviation and falsehood** (*kutub aḍ-ḍalāl*), if a Muslim fears that his children might be affected by them, or that he himself might succumb to intellectual or behavioural deviation from truth?
A- Yes, the matter is likewise – if not more so.

(C) Purity and Impurity (*Aṭ-Ṭahārah wan-Najāsah*)

C1 – There are **public washing machines and dryers** in non-Muslim countries, and Muslims and non-Muslims put their clothes in them. Sometimes non-Muslims are seen putting their damp clothes into the machines. What is the ruling regarding the purity of clothes which Muslims put in after that?
A – When the transfer of impurities is doubtful, the ruling is that the clothes are pure (*ṭāhir*). That said, we do not differentiate at all, in the ruling regarding purity, between Muslims and non-Muslims, and therefore there is no problem in these cases.

C2 – What is the ruling regarding the **dampness which we find on seats of buses** etc, which may contain impurities from alcoholic beverages, dogs etc, and given that we do not know how these (seats) are (normally) cleaned?
A – In the absence of knowledge or certainty that they are impure (*najis*), they should be regarded as pure (*ṭāhir*).

C3 – When a Muslim takes over **a house from a non-Muslim** (i.e. buys, rents etc), should he regard the house inherently pure (*ṭāhir*) or must it be purified if he intends to live in it, seeing that he (the non-Muslim) may have lived there with his dog and may have drunk alcoholic beverages in the house?

A – In the absence of knowledge of that impurity (*najāsah*) has been transferred to the house or its furniture, it is regarded as pure (*ṭāhir*).

C4 – Are the **bodies and clothes of the People of the Book** and all that relates to them, such as furniture, pure (*ṭāhir*) in cases of wetness and dampness, especially on rainy days in these countries?

A – According to us, the People of the Book are pure, therefore these (things) should be regarded as pure (*ṭāhir*) unless we know that impurities have touched them.

C5 – In Western countries, do we have to check to see whether impure (*najis*) **clothes that are washed in private basins**, are washed with water or chemicals?

A – When there is doubt, you have to check that they are purified using water.

C6 – In Western countries, do we have to check, before **using a water closet (WC)**, whether it is installed **in the direction of the Ka'bah or not?**

A – Checking is not obligatory since it is (only) a voluntary precaution to abstain from being in the direction of the Ka'bah or in the opposite direction, with one's back to the Ka'bah (when using the WC). That said, this is absolutely allowed (*jā'iz*) when you do not know if you are in the directions described above.

C7 – Is **alcohol** (ritually) inherently pure (*tāhir*)? What is the ruling regarding **perfumes and medicines which contain alcohol**?
A – Alcohol is inherently pure (*tāhir*), and therefore everything that contains it is pure.

C8 – How can hands, clothes and utensils be purified after **becoming *najis* (contaminated) with alcohol**?
A – We rule that alcohol is inherently pure (*tāhir*), and therefore there is no problem with this.

C9 – If a **dog licks my body or clothes**, how can I purify them?
A- It is sufficient to purify them once with a large amount of water (*mā' kathīr*), or twice if using a small amount of water (*mā' qalīl*).

C10 – How can we purify the body and **clothes if licked by a dog**?
A – As we do when they touch other impurities (*najāsāt*), since using (earth) dust is specified for (purifying) utensils touched on the inside by a dog.
(Note: This second question is included because it points out that purifying by earth is used only for the inside of utensils, and so the purification of clothes should be done according to the answer of the first question, i.e. by water. The translator.)

C11 – Should we regard as pure (*tāhir*) all **things in a house that we rent** in Western countries, whatever the religion of the people who lived there before?
A – We rule that all human beings are inherently pure (*tāhir*) – Muslims and non-Muslims – and therefore the ruling regarding things which non-Muslims have used applies to things which Muslims use when there is doubt about their purity.

C12 – If we **doubt that a washing machine has purified clothes** due to our doubt about how it works, what should we do?
A – It seems that it (the washing machine) does purify the clothes, (but) it is good to check how it works.

C13 – Should we regard as pure the **clothes washed with washing materials** (i.e. powders etc) **in launderettes** in the West?
A – If we know that impurities (*najāsah*) have not gone onto them first, then they are pure (*tāhir*), because clothes cannot be purified except by washing with water.

C14 – What is the ruling regarding **soap that contains pig's fat**?
A – It is inherently impure (*najis*). However, it can be used in cleaning, as long as the place that has touched it is later cleansed.

C15 – Is buying **toothbrush with bristles made of pig's hair** allowed?
A – It is allowed.

C16 – Are **alcoholic beverages and beer** pure (*tāhir*)?
A – All alcohol – including all beverages – are inherently pure (*tāhir*).

C17 – What is the ruling regarding **leather items manufactured in non-Muslim countries**, if it is probable that the leather has been imported from Muslim countries?
A – They are pure (*tāhir*) and prayer can be performed wearing them.

C18 – If a Muslim is **living in a house with people of different religions**, such as Buddhists, and all of them drink alcohol and urinate while standing, and everything in this house is impure (*najis*),

how can he perform his worship in the house? (Note: the kitchen and lavatories are shared.)
A – He should allocate a garment for his prayers, and purify his ablution organs and body. In this way, he can overcome the difficulties. Alternatively, he should move to another place if he can.

C19 – You rule that all human beings are inherently pure, but what **food and drink items** of the People of the Book, and of those other than them, are **excluded (from the allowed)**?
A – The exclusions are the dead (animals), and whatever is slaughtered without reciting the name of Allāh (i.e. saying '*bismillāh*'), and all the other Islamic forbidden items.

(D) Prayer (*Aṣ-Ṣalāt*)

D1 – Can the **compass used for determining the *qiblah*** (the direction of the Ka'bah) be relied upon?
A- Yes, if satisfaction is met as to the direction of the *qiblah*, such as there being no clear sign of malfunction in it.

D2 – I was in a non-Muslim country and did not know the **direction of the *qiblah*** (i.e. from a given place to the location of the Ka'bah, Meccah), and so I prayed in the direction of the South. Was my prayer correct, and what should I have done in this case?
A – If the prayer was between the East and the West, so that you have a good probability that it was in the direction of the Kiblah, your prayer was correct, because depending on assumption (*dhann*) regarding the Kiblah is valid.

D3 – How should we **pray in aeroplanes**, regarding the direction of Mecca and the way to perform prayer? Is it obligatory to pray standing, or is it allowable to pray sitting, even if praying standing is possible?

A – Prayer in aeroplanes must be performed in the direction of Mecca according to the instructions of the captain or anyone who knows the direction; complete confidence in their instructions is not a condition. The prayer must be performed standing as far as it is possible, and it cannot be performed sitting when performing it standing is possible.

D4 – If the **lengths of night and day** differ between two countries, how should I perform my prayer and fasting if I travel from one of these countries to the other?

A – According to the times of prayer and fasting in that (second) country, if there is night or day.

D5 – In some countries, **the sun does not go down** (there is no sunset), or (conversely) – in certain seasons – it does not rise for many days or months. On which set of times should a person depend for his prayer and fasting?

A – Regarding prayer, he should pray the five prayers at any time he wants, (but) as a precaution (*aḥwaṭ*), the times should conform to the nearest towns or countries. As for fasting, if there is no day at all, or the day is continuous, fasting is not obligatory, and he must perform it later (*qaḍā'*).

D6 – If Muslims, in non-Muslim countries, are not able to determine the **beginning of dawn, noon or sunset** to pray or fast, should they

be satisfied (*iṭmi'nān*) by the judgement of observatories, even if those supervising them are not Muslims?
A – If they are trustworthy in terms of their experience and truthfulness, depending on them for this, and performing worship according to what they say, is allowed.

D7 – How can we ascertain **(the time of) midnight**?
A – By noting the times of sunset and dawn (i.e. it is the mid-point between these two times).

D8 – What is the ruling regarding **praying in a place if we do not know who the owner** is?
A – Praying in such a place is not allowed without the permission of its owner.

D9 – What is the ruling regarding **praying while wearing a leather belt** or carrying a leather purse?
A – It is allowed when you are unsure about their purity; however, it is a voluntary precaution (*iḥtiyāṭ mustaḥabb*) to abstain from this.

D10 – In some Western countries, North America, Canada and others, **the sun** goes down (during sunset) quickly, and is often **not visible because of clouds**. How should **the times of the (daily) prayers** by ascertained?
A – When there are clouds, people can depend on other signs by which they can judge the start of the prayer times; and knowledge that is not certainty *(dhann)* is sufficient in this case.

D11 – Is the disappearance of the eastern redness (*al-ḥumrah al-mashriqiyyah*) a condition for the start of the **time of the *maghrib***

(sunset) prayer, given that in Northern Europe in winter it does not disappear (for a long time), and sometimes the western redness (*al-ḥumrah al-maghribiyyah*) lasts (well into the night)?
A – Our opinion is that the time of the *maghrib* prayer starts when the sun's disc disappears, but it is a voluntary precaution (to wait for) the disappearance of the eastern redness.

D12 – Is performing **prayers in the home of a person of the People of the Book**, and using a cloth (for a mat) that he claims to have been washed, acceptable?
A – According to our ruling, the People of the Book are pure, so prayers can be performed in his house, because by extension this (ruled) purity applies also to whatever is inside it, unless we know that the cloth or clothes which we want to use for prayers are impure, or that impurities are to be found on them and that they have not been purified.

D13 – Will the **title of *al-waṭan* (homeland)** continue to be applied if a Muslim (from that homeland) still hopes to return to it – even though he is unable to do so?
A – The title *al-waṭan* stays (applicable for rulings of related acts of worship etc) for as long as the desire to return to it lasts, even if there are circumstances which prevent him from returning; unless the hope is so remote as to be almost non-existent.

D14 – What is the ruling regarding a person who **intended to stay in a certain place for ten days then wants to travel** to a nearby area during his stay, returning that same day, but his **travel distance** is more than the (Islamic jurisprudence travel) distance limit – should

he consider himself resident in the original place, or that his residence became void (after travelling)?
A – The ruling in this case is to pray a shorter prayer (*qaṣr*), since his residence (in the first place) ended with travelling, unless if he sets out (with the intention of beginning) a new ten-day residence.

D15 – A plane departs from New York at 11 pm and arrives at Amsterdam at 11 am, after seven hours of flight. However, with regard to the time, the time for **dawn prayer** will not have occurred at the New York time. What is the ruling regarding the dawn prayer?
A – If the time has not arrived yet according to the plane time, it is not obligatory to pray the dawn prayer as *qaḍā'* (later).

D16 – At university there is a praying room for Muslims. Is it allowed to pray with the congregation, even though it does not belong to my school of thought?
A – It is allowed to pray with them, but recite for yourself, and you shall have the reward of congregation.

D17 – Some people **perform the daily prayers** for years, and might perform pilgrimage to Mecca, **whilst not paying *khums*** throughout this period. Is it obligatory for them to re-do the prayers and pilgrimage?
A- It is not obligatory to do that because their prayers and pilgrimage are valid. Indeed, the spirit of praying and pilgrimage implies that the person should carry out all duties that God the Most High has made obligatory for him.

D18 – If someone **travels from his town immediately after the call of noon (*dhuhr*) prayer** but without praying, and arrives at his

destination after sunset; has he sinned? And is it obligatory for him to perform the noon prayer as *qaḍā*?
A- Yes, he sinned if he deliberately had not prayed; he must perform it as *qaḍā'* anyway.

D19 – Is it allowed for a Muslim when watching an enjoyable film to go **on watching the film when the time for prayer comes**, provided that when the film ends he performs his prayer, even though this is only a short time before the elapse of the time allocated for that prayer?
A- What he loses from not praying at the commencement time is greater than the enjoyment he gets from the film. However, he did not commit a forbidden act, but committed something that might show the weakness of his dedication and attention to Allah.

D20 – Sometimes the **time for prayer occurs when the student is on his way to the university**, but when he arrives at the university he finds that the time has elapsed. Is he allowed to pray in the car, even when there are other places in which he could perform his prayers but would cause him delay if he went there to pray?
A- If, by arriving late at his university, no harm (*ḍarar*) or intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*) is incurred, he should find a place to perform his prayer; otherwise, he should pray as *muḍṭar* (under a state of compulsion) in the car.

D21 – If the **time for prayer arrives when we are working**, are we allowed to use some of our work time to perform the prayer, if this does not affect the progress of our work? And if it does affect our work, is it allowed? And is the prayer valid? Is seeking the permission of the work boss obligatory?

A- This matter depends on the job contract. If the contract implies using the whole time for work, then getting the boss's permission is obligatory; but prayer can never be left unperformed.

D22 – Regarding **prayers and fasting**, for those who have a **temporary job away (travelling) for a month, or two or three months** – such as students during the summer holidays –should the rulings for those who have a job requiring permanent travel be followed, or the traveller's rulings?
A- Yes, if this is their habit every summer, then their ruling should be that of a person who travels a lot (*kathīr as-safar*). However, if this travelling takes places as an exception, such as once or twice so that it is not their habit, they have to pray the shortened prayer (*takṣīr*) and break their fast.

(E) Food and Drink

E1 – What is the ruling regarding **eating canned food** when there is some suspicion that it may contain forbidden items?
A – If the matter does not attain the level of satisfaction (*iṭmi'nān*) (that it contains forbidden items) it is allowed, otherwise it is not.

E2 – What is the ruling concerning **animals which have been slaughtered by a non-Muslim** if he has recited the name of Allāh (i.e. saying '*bismillāh*') when doing the slaughtering?
A – It is precautionary to avoid this (i.e. not eat from such slaughtered animals); even if we might have a good case for it being allowed.

E3 – If a Muslim **bought meat from a non-Muslim, or took it from a non-Muslim, or from a Muslim who had bought or taken it from a non-Muslim**, and he did not ask about its state of purity (*tathkiyah*) at the time when he bought or took it, what is the ruling?
A – It is not allowed to be eaten.

E4 – What are the conditions that make **eating fish** – in all its kinds – allowed? And do the same conditions apply to **fish eggs**?
A – (1) It must have scales, even if only on part of its body as precautionary condition (*aḥwaṭ*). (2) It must come out of the water alive, or die in the net or the like. Regarding fish eggs, the same conditions apply.

E5 – What about **eating at a table at which alcoholic beverages** are being drunk?
A – Not allowed.
E6 – What is the ruling regarding **going to places where alcoholic beverages are offered with food**?
A – Not allowed, from the point of view of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil) – when their conditions are met. (However,) it is allowed in cases of intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*) or in non-Islamic areas, but with the precaution to avoid this (not to go).

E7 – What is the ruling regarding **cheese which contains calf rennet**?
A – Eating it is allowed.

E8 - What is the ruling regarding **gelatine**?
A – Eating it is allowed.

E9 - What is the ruling regarding **alcohol-free beer**?
A – Drinking it is allowed.

E10 – Is it allowed **to cook and serve non-*ḥalāl* meat to those who regard it as allowed**?
A – It is allowed.

E11 – Is it allowed **to sell pork to those who regard it as allowed**, and is it allowed **to serve it** to them?
A – This is allowed, but buying it to sell it to them is not allowed; as a precaution, it (selling or serving pork) should be avoided.

E12 – Is it allowed **to wash glasses and dishes in which alcoholic beverages are served**? Is it allowed to serve them (alcoholic beverages) to those who regard them as allowed?
A – This (washing glasses and dishes) is allowed, but serving alcoholic beverages to them (those who regard them as allowed) is not allowed.

E13 – What is the ruling regarding **buying and selling gold and silver utensils**, and the ruling regarding **using them for eating and drinking**?
A – It is allowed to buy and sell them, but not allowed to use them in eating and drinking.

E14 – Is it allowed to **eat meat in the Muslim homes** of those, in the West, **who have no religious adherence**?
A – It is allowed if we do not see impurities, or know of their presence (in the meat), or have doubts about whether it is pure. Eating meat while you are not certain that it has come from an

animal slaughtered according to Islamic law is allowed, unless one becomes convinced that this has not taken place (i.e. it has not been slaughtered according to Islamic law).

E15 – Is **rennet taken from a dead animal** allowed or forbidden?
A – Rennet is pure and is excluded from (the rulings about) dead animals.

E16 – When eating ***ḥalāl* food in Western restaurants**, is it obligatory to investigate the kind of oil (used): vegetable, or animal, (or one) in which fish and other foods have been fried?
A – Such investigation is not obligatory.

E17 – What if it is known – by **common knowledge (*shiyā'*) – that most restaurants use animal oil or otherwise**?
A – If this leads to sufficiency certainty (in the *shiyā'*), or to knowing, then investigation is obligatory, unless some of them are outside the area of the (common) test (*maḥal ibtilā'*).

E18 – Is it sufficient **to recite the name of Allāh over a number of animals being slaughtered simultaneously and quickly using a machine?**
A – Reciting the name of Allāh for each animal is a must, (but) one recital when slaughtering a number of animals is sufficient if they are slaughtered at exactly the same time.

E19 – It is known that **sitting at a table where there are alcoholic beverages** is not allowed. However, in cafés in Europe and elsewhere, alcoholic beverages are sold side by side with, for instance,

orange juice. Is it allowed for Muslims to sit there, eat and drink, **when someone is drinking alcohol nearby**?

A – Sitting at a table where alcohol is being drunk is not allowed, but sitting at another table is allowed, even if it is near to the table where alcohol is being drunk; also, sitting at a long table, so that the alcohol is far from your sitting place, and where there is a real distance between those sitting so that the table cannot really be regarded as one, is also allowed – provided that nothing forbidden takes place as a consequence.

E20 – Is it allowed to accept **an invitation from a neighbour who is one of the People of the Book**, if you avoid eating forbidden foods, but if the meal includes pork and alcoholic beverages for him (the neighbour)?

A – It is not allowed to sit at such a table, since it involves alcohol, unless if this is a case of intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*).

E21 – Is it allowed to eat **food supplied by a person who sells alcoholic beverages**?

A – There is no objection to this, unless it is a question of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil).

E22 – If the **person slaughtering** (animals for their meat) **is a Sunni** and (thus) does not believe in the condition of directing the animal (towards the Ka'bah) – which is a fundamental condition in our jurisprudence – and, therefore, **carries out the slaughter without directing the animal**, with neither its slaughtering point (the neck) nor its front (facing **towards the Ka'bah**), is it allowed for us to eat from this animal; and what about the *tasmiyah* (reciting the name of Allāh)?

A – It is allowed regarding the direction (of the Ka'bah). Regarding the *tasmiyah* (reciting the name of Allāh), however, eating the slaughtered animal is forbidden when it (the *tasmiyah*) is omitted intentionally.

E23 – What is the ruling when there is **doubt concerning foods and drinks** as to whether they are **inherently pure (*ṭāhir*) or impure (*najis*)** – is it allowed to eat and drink them, or not?
A – It is allowed to eat and drink them.

E24 – We have heard that **Kraft cheese** contains pork fat. What is your Eminence's ruling on this: is eating it allowed?
A – This has not become established for us, and therefore it is allowed to eat it, bearing in mind the doubt.

E25 – Regarding meat: some brothers who work in specialist companies tell me that the **slaughter procedure** is first to hang the animal in an electric machine, then they slaughter it using electric shocks.
A – If it is slaughtered according to the Islamic way when still alive – with all that life in an animal's body means – so that these electric shocks do not affect the termination of its life, then there is no objection.

E26 – I live in Canada and follow Sayyid al-Sīstāniyy, and I work in a shop selling food. Is it allowed **to sell non-*ḥalāl* meat or pork**, or meat that contains pig's fat?
A – It seems that it is not allowed, but that the money is to be taken for exchange of the right of belonging (*ikhtiṣāṣ*) – this is according to his ruling. Regarding our ruling, selling and taking the money are

allowed if the selling is done to people who regard these foods allowable (in their religion), but it is not allowed to buy it (in the first place) in order to sell it.

E27 – I am a refugee in Europe and in our town there is an 'Eastern' shop owned by a Muslim. He imports foods, including **meat that is stamped with 'slaughtered according to the Islamic method'**, and he swears that this is the case. Does this provide sufficient (evidence) to buy it?

A – If his assurance provides satisfaction (*iṭmi'nān*) then no problem; this is if there is a chance that he knows the Islamic slaughter method, for **'The hand of a Muslim is a sign that the slaughter has been Islamic.'**

E28 – Is it enough if the **response of a Turkish Muslim is that his meat is *ḥalāl***, or should we do more to assure ourselves about it?

A – It is enough to allow eating it, unless one is satisfied that he is lying.

E29 – What is the Islamic ruling regarding **eating foods sold in Western markets** and about which there is **doubt that pork or pig's fat have been included** in their manufacture?

A – If one has doubts that pork, pig's fat or dead animal products may have been included in its manufacture, but cannot be sure about this in any way, it is ruled as *ḥalāl* and allowed to be eaten.

E30 – Chemical ingredients are included in the production of some foods and drinks and are denoted by numbers such as E388. Some Islamic centres in Germany and France say that some of these contain pig's fat. Is this considered as a reliable witness based on

knowledge; and can their certificate that the meat is *ḥalāl* be considered valid?

A – That the certificate of these centres provides reliable knowledge is a matter of how much the person in question trusts the expertise and trustworthiness of these centres. If their statements do not provide him with (sufficiently reassuring) knowledge, he is not obliged to follow it; precaution is good in all cases.

E31 – If one becomes doubtful that the **oil in which fish is fried** is used at the same time for frying non-*ḥalāl* chicken, is asking in this regard obligatory, and is it allowed to eat this fish?

A – It is ruled as *ḥalāl* and pure if there is doubt concerning impurities, according to the assumptions presented in the question.

E32 – Is it allowed to eat **food that contains meat on a plane** of a company owned by an Arab country in which most, if not all, its citizens are Muslims, when the plane is leaving a Western country, and if it is known that the food is taken from the country of departure, but when the plane's crew, if asked regarding that meat, cannot confirm that it is *ḥalāl*?

A – If it is known that the food comes from a non-Muslim country, it is not allowed to eat the meat it contains. However, if this is not known and there is a probability that it comes from the Muslim country then it is allowed.

E33 – Some industrial companies extract **pig's oil**, i.e. its fat, to use it in certain purifiers, such as some types of soap and creams. What is the ruling regarding using these purifiers?

A – It is impure (*najis*) and the ruling is the same as that which applies to pigs.

E34 – Is it allowed to buy **meat from shops owned by Muslims who are not trustworthy** and who sell alcohol in their shops?
A – If we are unable to buy from those who do not sell alcohol, then it is allowed.

E35 – Sometimes we **buy from schools or (petrol) stations foods whose ingredients we cannot read**, but after we open them we find that they contain forbidden items. Is it allowed to give them to Christian colleagues?
A – If these are allowed in their religion, then giving them to them is allowed, except alcohol which is not allowed.

E36 – I work in trade, and every month I am in a different country, and the factories' owners that I deal with **invite me for dinner and they order alcoholic beverages** and put it on the table. What is the ruling regarding this? Conversely, when they come to me I invite them for dinner and they order alcoholic beverages and I do not know what to do.
A – If they order alcohol and you are in intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*), then the verse **'and laid on you no burdens in the observance of your faith'** 22:78 applies, because you will be harmed if you leave (hence it is allowed for you to stay). Otherwise it is not allowed to sit at a table at which alcohol is being drunk, unless by not doing so you will get into intense difficulty, causing harm to your work or a problem for you. Regarding serving alcohol to them, this is not allowed and you must explain to them that you are a Muslim and that you cannot invite them for this.

E37 – Sayyid al-Kho'iyy ruled that it is allowable **to sit at a table with alcoholic beverages** on it provided that **its length is 10m** or

so (for instance), but it is not allowable **to sit at a separate table** if it is quite close (to the alcohol). What is your ruling in this matter?
A – If the table is long and the alcohol is far from where the person is sitting and there is a real separation between the people sitting at the table so that they cannot be considered as sitting at one table – and observe how what is noted is the unity of the group of people and the location – then, according to our ruling, there is no objection to sitting at this table in the light of the assumptions of the question.

E38 – Some **seafoods** are not fish, so what is the proof of their prohibition? The Prophet's *ḥadīth* to eat the fish that have scales, and not to eat those that do not, does not cover all seafood.
A – Sea animals are either fish or non-fish, and fish either have scales or have no scales. The (*Shī'ah*) *Imāmiyyah*'s known ruling, based on *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (sawa) and the Imams (as), is the prohibition of eating everything except fish with scales and, therefore, we must keep to this kind only. It is an obligatory precaution (*aḥwaṭ wujūban*) to avoid eating all fish that have no scales and any other type of seafood.

E39 – **On labels for canned fish**, we sometimes find the **name or picture of the fish**, telling us that the fish has scales. Is this sufficient for us to rely on in determining the kind (of fish) – and given that we know that deception in such matters would expose the company to big losses, and perhaps even greater penalties?
A- If the purchase is made on the grounds of satisfaction (*iṭmi'nān*) that the fish had scales, then there is no problem in eating it. Eating is also allowed if there is doubt as to whether it had scales, but abstention from doing so is better in this case.

E40 – Is it allowed to eat allowable **food that has been steamed with a steam from a non-*ḥalāl* meat**?
A- It is allowed.

E41 – If a Muslim enters a café, **sits down to drink tea** and a **stranger comes to drink alcohol at the same table**, is he obliged to stop drinking his tea and leave?
A- He should leave that table and go to another one, if this does not incur intense difficulty. However, if the table is long enough, so that his sitting at that table is not considered to be sitting in the place where alcohol is being consumed, then it is allowed.

E42 – Is it allowed to eat **fried nuts and seeds** if there is doubt over whether the oil in which they have been fried is animal or vegetable?
A- It is allowed.

E43 – There are **meat factories in which Lebanese and non-Lebanese Muslims**, most of whom are Shī'ite, work, and they have told us that the slaughter (of the animals) is Islamic (according to Islamic guidelines). Can we depend on their information, and can we buy meat on the basis that the hand of the Muslim is pure?
A – It is O.K. to depend on the hand or the information from a Muslim about the hand (carrying out the slaughter), if they are not known to be liars.

(F) Dress and Appearance

F1 – What is the ruling regarding **wearing gold for men**, during prayer and at other times?

A – Absolutely not allowed.

F2 – What is the ruling regarding **wearing chains and bracelets for young men**, if not made of gold?
A – It is allowed as a matter of principle, but they should not do this simply to imitate others.

F3 – What is the ruling regarding **wearing non-Muslim dress**?
A – I do not believe that there is any true example of this, and even if we assume there is, it is not forbidden these days.

F4 – What is the ruling regarding **clothes which bear advertisements for alcoholic beverages**?
A – Wearing them is not allowed.

F5 – What is the ruling regarding **wearing silk clothes for men**?
A – Wearing them is not allowed.

F6 – What is the ruling regarding a **man leaving his hair to grow long**, or giving it a hairstyle like that of infidels, or dressing like them?
A – This is not forbidden, unless it is to support them or propagate their way of thinking and way of life.

F7 – Is it forbidden for women **to wear a necklace or a gold ring bearing a cross**, as jewellery, even though they do not believe in this symbol?
A – It is not allowed because it represents the propagation of the idea of crucifixion, which we do not believe in, and the symbol of another religion.

F8 – Is it allowed for a **woman to wear a dress if the lowest edge reaches the middle of the calf** (between the knee and the foot), or is higher than the foot by five or ten joined fingers, provided that she is wearing a thick socks that cover her feet and legs?
A – It is allowed as far as covering the body is concerned; however, if this can be described as in excess of the allowed dress codes or if her dress is provocative, then it is not allowed.

F9 – What is the **highest level to which the dress or cloak** may be raised when socks are worn?
A – The Islamic legal position is that a woman should go out as a human being who present the human meaning of her personality, and should not provoke instinctive feelings for her femininity.

F10 – What is the ruling regarding **coloured contact lenses**, when the reason for wearing them is **for beauty** and as a cosmetic? Is it allowed to go out with them in the presence of marriageable men?
A – If they are socially considered as cosmetic, or if they are an example of not-allowed make-up (*tabarruj*), then this is not allowed.

F11 – Is there a problem about **men wearing shorts**?
A – This is not a problem in itself, since the obligation is to cover the *'awrah* (sexual organs and anus). However, going out in shorts, especially in the presence of people and women, may become forbidden on a secondary-level basis (of the ruling) (*al-'unwān ath-thānewiyy*) in some cases. In any case, it is something that is not good for the believer.

F12 – Is it allowed for **a woman to go out wearing make-up**, such as kohl and lipstick, and is it allowed for **her husband to put pressure on her to prevent her** from doing this?
A – Putting pressure on her is allowed if she disobeys him, since going out with full make-up is forbidden: **'and they should not display their beauty'** 24:31. Her husband has to stop her, but through wisdom and good advice.

F13 – Is it allowed for **Muslim women who are refugees** in the West to accept the authorities' request **to take photographs without the *ḥijāb*** or showing certain parts of their heads?
A – It is allowed if a woman is taking the photographs, and there is no objection from the Islamic standpoint, and given the assumptions of the question, to supplying such photographs to the authorities, in light of the pressure of the realistic need to do this.

F14 – If a **Muslim woman** in an essential public job is **forced to take off her *ḥijāb***, what should she do? And if she takes off her *ḥijāb* due to the pressure of necessity in some societies, what should her Muslim husband's stance be?
A – She must not work in a job in which she is compelled to disobey Allāh the Most High, whether regarding the *ḥijāb* or otherwise. But her husband is not obliged to divorce her, otherwise a lot of men would divorce their wives. If a wife goes out without her *ḥijāb* and with more-than-allowable make-up, this is sin; but if she then indulges in backbiting against people over this issue, then this is grand sin (*kabīrah*); and if she causes *fitnah* among others this is grand sin as well. But Allāh has not made it obligatory on a person to divorce his wife if she disobeys Allāh, otherwise the Prophet (sawa)

would have divorced some of his own wives in light of things that the Qur'ān talks about.
Therefore, he has to speak to her with wisdom and good advice, and to study her circumstances and the blights that may occur to himself, his children or his reality, and to try to give the question all the attention that it demands.

F15 – In some societies the ***ḥijāb* is considered a sign of fundamentalism**, and it **affects Muslim women and may sometimes expose them to danger**. Is this in itself a justification to take off the *ḥijāb*, especially if they preserve some sort of dress deemed respectable by that society?
A – This is not allowed, for we believe that Muslim men and women must not run away from every situation that frightens them, and we have to emphasize our obligatory Islamic traditions, and to emphasize our religious adherence, and we should make an issue of standing fast at least in this matter before the oppressors. I believe that they cannot fight all Muslim society and all the Muslim women wearing the *ḥijāb*: **'It is Satan that prompts men to fear his followers; but have no fear of them, and fear Me, if you are true believers.'** 3:175.

F16 – What are **the limits of women sports**? Can women play tennis, for example, if they observe their Islamic dress?
A – No objection whatsoever to women participating in sports, provided that this is with other women not men, and provided that they observe the Islamic *ḥijāb* rules, for women need sports no less than men, and there is nothing that prohibits this from the point of view of Islamic principle.

F17 – Is it allowed for **a girl to play sports at school with her male classmates**?

A – It is allowed, provided that all that is related to clothing and the *ḥijāb* is observed, and also in some cases that no marriageable person is present.

F18 – Some women ask if it is allowed for them **to wear wide trousers instead of a manteau or cloak**?

A – There is no definitive kind of *ḥijāb*, but it has to cover the body first, and not be something that causes provocation (of desires). Thus the matter differs between one case and another. In some cases, a *ḥijāb* may cover the body but may also contain an element that provokes desire. Everything which is connected to elements that convey (the provocative features of) feminism to strangers is something which the *Sharī'ah* has reservations about.

F19 – The learned scholars rule that **wearing natural pure silk** is prohibited. Is it allowed for **men to wear silk that is mixed with other material** if it is a tie? And is it prohibited to wear a tie that is made of natural pure silk?

A- If the proportion of the other material is greater than the silk, it is allowed. Regarding pure silk, it is allowed to wear items of clothing, provided that they are not considered to be items that cover the private parts on their own; this also applies to other clothing that does not cover the private parts.

(G) Man and Woman

G1 – What is the ruling regarding **intermixing between the two sexes**?
A – It is allowed from the point of view of principle, provided that it does not lead to a forbidden act or incite lust, or the like.

G2 – What is the ruling regarding performing the **sexual act (i.e. intercourse) with a woman from the People of the Book** without an Islamic legal marriage contract?
A – It is not allowed.

G3 – What is the ruling regarding **looking at non-Muslim women** wearing more-than-the-allowed make-up (*mutabarrijāt*), whether with desire or without? Also, what is a forbidden look (*an-nadhrah al-muḥarramah*)?
A – It is allowed if without bad intentions (*rībah*), with the precaution that it is not a look of pleasure (*talaththuth*). A forbidden look is one which leads to forbidden act, or one which is intended to result in a forbidden act.

G4 – As for the **women in the West** among those to whom you forbid these things but who nonetheless do not abandon these forbidden things (***ithā nuhīna lā yantahīn***) – can you look at them?
A – It is allowed.

G5 – What is the ruling regarding **looking at photos and pictures and pornography films**, if without desire?

A – It is not allowed, due to the moral corruption which they can cause.

G6 – What is the ruling regarding **swimming in mixed swimming pools**?
A – It is not allowed.

G7 – Shaking hands with women is common here, and (women, as a matter of course), will offer their hand for you to shake. What is the ruling regarding **shaking a woman's hand in cases of compulsion (*ḥaraj*) or harm (*ḍarar*) cases**? And what if shaking the hand in normal cases is performed without pressing on her palm?
A – It is allowed in compelling (*haraj*) cases, but not allowed otherwise.

G8 – In **Western schools**, pupils – boys and girls – are taught **sex education** accompanied with two-dimensional and three-dimensional illustrations of the sex organs. Is it allowed for the youth to attend such lessons?
A – It is allowed, provided that the lessons are offered in scientific way.

G9 – Is it allowed **to talk with women about love**, provided that it is not for the purpose of pleasure (*talaththuth*), or with bad intentions (*rIbah*) or as an invitation to a forbidden thing?
A – Believers should not do so, and it may even become forbidden since **'who wanders around a protected land is about to fall into it'**?

G10 – Is it allowed to **read love poems in front of women**, provided that it is without the intention of directing the meaning towards them, or with that intention in the case of non-married women?
A – It is allowed provided that it does not lead to a blight (something that causes harm or spoils things.)

G11 – Is it allowed for **women to show the top of their feet** before marriageable men?
A – It is allowed, but it is precautionary (*aḥwaṭ*) to avoid doing this.

G12 – Is it allowed for **women to wear kohl**; is it considered part of make-up (*ẓīnah*)? And what is the ruling regarding **(wearing) cosmetics** before marriageable men?
A – It is allowed in itself. As for cosmetics, it is obligatory precaution (*iḥtiyāṭ wujūbiyy*) to not to wear them.

G13 – What is the ruling regarding **women wearing perfume and going out to public places**?
A – It is allowed, provided that it does not lead to someone with bad intentions (*al-lathī fī qalbihī maraḍ*) taking advantage of them.

G14 – What is the ruling regarding **watching films that incite lust**?
A – Watching such films contributes to a loss of belief and moral resistance, and so is not allowed.

G15 – When a **husband is travelling and his wife is at home** in their place of emigration, this might make her vulnerable to kidnap or other dangers. Is she allowed **to go to the house of her**

husband's friend, which might lead to her being alone with him (*khalwah*)?

A – This is allowed in compelling cases (*iḍṭirār*), but only if negative consequences for the wife will not take place, and if her self-restraint is assured.

G16 – Is it allowed – in any cases at all – **to look upon nude men and women**, without any covering partition, or at their private parts – sexual organs and the anus – on the TV or in magazines, even without bad intentions (*rībah*) or there being no question of pleasure (*talaththuth*)?

A – This is allowed, if it is not with deviant intent.

G17 – There is a practice in the Netherlands and in many European countries whereby every family has one doctor who is responsible for (the healthcare of all family members including) the woman, children and babies. Is it allowed for a **woman to undergo a medical body examination**?

A – If she is able to see a female doctor, her circumstances permitting, and if a male doctor is not better in terms of his treatment than the female doctor, she is not allowed (to be examined by a male doctor). Women are allowed to see a male doctor, when the consultation involves body examination, with clothes on or with clothes removed and concerning sensitive parts, only when he is considered to offer better treatment than female doctors.

G18 – What is the ruling regarding a **woman from the People of the Book who drinks alcohol and does not abide by rulings of pure and impure things (*ṭahārah* and *najāsa*)** – how can anyone

live with her regarding pure and impure things and their consequences? Or is she inherently pure (*ṭāhir*) in the first place?

A – Our ruling is that all infidels are inherently pure (*ṭāhir*), whether they from among the People of the Book or idol worshippers, and that marrying a woman from the People of the Book is allowed, permanently or temporarily, provided that, as a consequence, the believer does not deviate from his religious adherence, or abandon the line of piety, or lose his moral resistance. Also, she must be trustworthy regarding the upbringing of children according to Islamic principles. Moreover, the husband must prohibit her from committing any forbidden thing in his home, such as drinking alcohol or eating pork or (the meat from) dead animals. Regarding pure and impure things, if, when she finds impurity on anything, she removes and purifies it, then these things are ruled as pure.

G19 – A **Muslim commits adultery with a woman from the People of the Book who has had many relations with others,** and she becomes pregnant and **gives birth to a boy** and wants to associate the boy with the Muslim (formally, as a blood-relation):

(a) Does he have **to make sure, through accurate medical tests,** that the boy is indeed his son and that he is related to him?

(b) If it is found that the **baby is his son, what are the Islamic consequences** of this, regarding his upbringing and other matters?

(c) If it is found that **he is not his son** but the son of a man from the People of the Book or an infidel (atheist), **can he legally become related to him,** so that in legal matters he is considered his son? And what are the matters about which he

must take caution from the Islamic standpoint, since the Muslim (man) would be his adopter in such a case?

(d) If it is found that **he is not his son**, but the son of a non-Muslim, is it recommended that the child **become legally related to him if the man and the woman want to get married**?

(e) If it is not obligatory for the Muslim to ascertain that the baby is his son, what will be **the fate of this baby**?

(f) If the **Muslim adopts him and marries his mother** *without* knowing the real father of the baby, what Islamic cautions come into play?

(g) If it is found that the **baby is not the Muslim's son**, and the Muslim wants to adopt him for religious or other reasons, is the Muslim obliged **to search for the real father** and make him known to the baby?

(h) Are there **any particular notes or advice** in this regard?

A –

(a) It is not obligatory to do that.

(b) He is obliged to maintain him and to bring him up in the correct Islamic manner since, in our opinion, he is his son – when it is certain that he is his son – except in matters of inheritance.

(c) It is not allowed because adoption – in the legal sense – is forbidden in Islam since Allāh says: **'nor made your adopted sons (*ad'iyā'kom*) as your own sons'** 33:4; the adopted son (*da'iyy*) means someone whom a person declares to be related to himself, although he is not his own son.

(d) It is not recommended, since the forbidden cannot be recommended.

(e) His case must be studied from another angle, other than adoption, so that he can be brought up religiously.
(f) The Islamic cautionary matters are related to making him his own son.
(g) It is not obligatory, according to the question's assumptions.
(h) Nothing except that he should adhere to God's do's and don'ts regarding the allowed and the forbidden things, and to learn a lesson from this negative, un-Islamic experience which gave him these Islamic legal problems, and to fear God in his relations with women so that they are not forbidden.

G20 – In hospitals patients are subject to **the touch of nurses** taking the pulse or blood pressure. What is the ruling regarding this?
A – If the patient is compelled (to have this done) as a norm, it is allowed.

G21 – Some **men look at girls in streets** on the basis that they are looking at them without bad intentions (*rībah*), but they extend their staring to the parts of their bodies which they are used not to cover, claiming that this is allowed. What is your opinion regarding this?
A – True that looking at women, to whom you forbid these things but who do not abandon these forbidden things (*ithā nuhina lā yantahin*), is allowed, but this is provided that you look without bad intentions (*rībah*), pleasure (*talaththuth*) or lust (*shahwah*), i.e. with a glance only. If someone is walking in the street and sees women not wearing the *ḥijāb* – observing what we said – he does not have to close his eyes. However, if he extends his looking and stares at women not wearing the *ḥijāb*, this means he is looking with bad intentions and pleasure, and this is forbidden. Here, one must take note of an important matter and this is that Satan enters into man

from open doors. As the *ḥadīth* says: **'The look is one of the arrows of Iblīs (Satan).'**

G22 – Is it allowed to be **introduced to a girl for the purpose of marriage through the internet**, provided that conversations do not violate morals or Islamic guidelines?

A – No objection under the conditions mentioned – that the conversation does not become sexually provocative.

G23 – Is the **mixing of the two sexes in intermediate and high schools** allowed, when it is absolutely certain that such mixing is going to lead to forbidden acts by male or female students, even if it is only a question of forbidden looks?

A- It is not allowed.

G24 – Is it allowed for **girls who are studying with Muslim young men** in non-Islamic universities to **accompany them for leisure in tourist trips** etc?

A- It is allowed when being tempted into forbidden acts is unlikely.

G25 – What is the ruling regarding **sexual intercourse for the AIDS patient**? And is it allowed for those who have not got the disease to abstain from it, since this is one of the main routes of infection?

A- Yes, it is allowed.

G26 – Is placing a man's seminal fluid inside the womb of a woman (not his wife) using **artificial insemination** subject to the rulings of adultery?

A- The ruling of adultery does not apply here, but it is not allowed and is a forbidden act in its own right.

G27 – Is it allowed for a male doctor to carry out a **medical examination on a woman** when she believes that **there is an emergency** that cannot be delayed?
A- Yes, allowed according to the conditions implied by the question.

G28 – If **custody of a son or daughter has returned to the father**, after the end of the mother's custody period, does the **mother have the right to stop the son or daughter from travelling with the father** because she wants to see or meet them? And is the right to see them regarded as essential, on the basis that (its absence) is a kind of severing of the ties of kinship (*qat' ar-raḥim*) – or does this fall into another category?
A- **'A mother should not be allowed to suffer on account of her child'** 2:233, and therefore the father is not allowed to do anything that prevents the mother from seeing the children, unless they reach an agreement to this effect.

(H) Marriage and Divorce

H1 – What is the ruling when it is **not possible to conduct the (marriage) contract in the Arabic language**?
A – It is allowed to carry it out in any language, if using the correct content.

H2 – What is the ruling regarding a **Muslim marrying a Jewish or Christian woman**?

A – It is allowed, but we do not encourage this because of its negative consequences.

H3 – What is the ruling regarding **marrying an infidel woman,** not from the People of the Book?
A – It is not allowed.

H4 – What is the ruling regarding **marrying a woman who is known to have been adulterous**, but **after she has repented** (and abandoned adultery)?
A – It is allowed on this condition.

H5 – Is it allowed to **talk to women dispassionately for** the purpose of becoming convinced of **(the suitability of marriage of)** one of them, before asking her to enter into a term marriage contract?
A – It is allowed.

H6 – Is it allowed to enter into **temporary/term (*zawāj mu'aqqat*) marriage with a woman of the People of the Book** without entering into a contract but like a kind of selling a thing (*bay'ul mu'āṭāt*)?
A – It is not allowed, and a contract must be entered into in the way dictated.

H7 – Is it a condition of the **term marriage** contract that **the woman** of the People of the Book **knows the nature of the marriage and its wording**?
A – She must understand that what is she entering into is a term marriage contract, after this she can appoint someone with power of

attorney to draw up the contract on her behalf if she is not able to do so herself, otherwise the relationship is (regarded as) illegitimate.

H8 – Is it allowed to enter into **term marriage** with a woman of the People of the Book **without her guardian's consent** if she is virgin?
A – It is allowed.

H9 – Does a **contract**, between a woman of the People of the Book and a Muslim man, **concluded in a church**, make their marriage legitimate, or it is obligatory to seal the contract according to Islamic *Shari'ah*?
A – It is not allowed to conclude the marriage contract in the church; it must be concluded according to the guidelines laid down by the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

H10 – Is it allowed to conclude the **contract by telephone**, or must both parties be present in one place?
A – It is correct; it is not a condition that both parties should be present in one place.

H11 – Regarding the **wording of the contract**, what should be done if the **woman does not know Arabic**?
A – She can appoint a proxy who can conclude the contract on her behalf in the Arabic language and with the conditions agreed upon, or she can conclude the contract using a foreign (non-Arabic) language, (but) in a way that includes all the terms of the contract.

H12 – If the **husband is an atheist** or denies the existence of the Creator, what is the ruling regarding his wife?

A – A Muslim woman is not allowed to marry a person who does not believe in God and the contract is regarded as void.

H13 – Is it allowed to enter into **term marriage** with a woman who says the words, but is in it only for sex or money, while in reality **she does not believe in term marriage**?
A – If the person is serious (when the wording) of the contract (is said) – even if it is for sex or money – it is allowed, but if it is done without seriousness it is not allowed.

H14 – Do you think that **marriage contracts** – both permanent and term – are valid if the *Ijāb* (the wording of the first part of the contract, normally recited by the woman) is done by the man and the *qubūl* (the wording of the second part of the contract, normally recited by the man) is done by the woman?
A – There is no problem with that, although it is precautionary (advisable) to do it in the reverse manner.

H15 – It is the norm in Western countries that girls are given freedom and independence in their lives, even if they (the girls) are not *rashīdah* (adult). Is it allowed **to enter into term marriage with a non-Muslim girl that is not *rashīdah* (adult) without her father's consent**?
A – If this (the norm) is like a general consent, it is allowed, otherwise consulting an Islamic (legal) judge is obligatory.

H16 – And **if she is Muslim**?
A – The same answer as the previous one.

H17 – A man knows an **adulterous woman**, but he does not know whether she is *mashhūrah* or not (common knowledge says that she is adulterous); is it allowed **to enter into term marriage** with her?
A – It is allowed to enter into term marriage with her.

H18 – If I was introduced to **a non-Muslim girl and I did not explain to her (the custom of) term marriage** in our religion, but all that I said was: 'Give me a power of attorney on your behalf'; would the contract be valid?
A – The contract is not valid unless she knows what exactly the power of attorney is for.

H19 – What is your ruling regarding **term marriage** with a woman of the People of the Book **without the consent of the permanent Muslim wife, or with her consent**? And what is the ruling regarding permanent marriage?
A – It is allowed.

H20 – Are **civil marriage contracts in the West**, which are carried out by the official asking the two parties if they accept marriage, sufficient from the Islamic legal point of view?
A – The contract is allowed and correct, provided that all the Islamic legal conditions of marriage are met.

H21 – A person was introduced to a **Christian married woman**, and **committed adultery with her** many times. Now, he **wants to marry her** after her divorce from her husband. Is this marriage valid, given that she wants to become a Muslim, i.e. after she becomes a Muslim, can he marry her, even though he committed adultery with her when she was married?

A – It is allowed to marry her in both term/temporary and permanent marriages, although it is voluntary precaution to avoid doing either.

H22 – A man, living in the West, **marries two women**. Is it allowed to **pretend that the second is a girlfriend** before the law of that state?

A – This is not allowed for fear of dishonouring the believer, for if he appears as a believer and also appears to be committing adultery this causes dishonour to believers. Another matter: some men divorce their wives legally but continue to live with them so that each one of them can receive a separate (Social Security) payment; this is also forbidden on a secondary-level basis (of the ruling) (*al-ʿunwān ath-thānewiyy*).

Many people cause dishonour to Islam and Muslims to get money, and these are amongst the greatest losers (*al-akhsarīn aʿmālan*) for **'their endeavours in this world are misguided, yet they think that what they do is right'** 18:104.

H23 – Is it allowed for a **Shi'ite woman to marry a Sunni**?

A – It is allowed, since all Muslims are equal and so a Shi'ite woman is allowed to marry a Sunni and a Shi'ite man is allowed to marry a Sunni woman, and this is something that the Islamic authorities declare as allowed. The only aspect of it that they may not like is that the woman may take (adopt) her the teachings of the religion from her husband, since he has some external control over her. But if she is certain of not being affected by the various intense pressures, then there is no problem.

H24 – Why is there no ruling from our scholars that **marrying an adulterous woman** is forbidden? Rather some of them – and you amongst them – have issued (only) a precaution regarding the woman who is notorious for adultery (*al-mashhūrah*), while the verse says: **'The adulterer may marry only an adulteress or an idolatress, and the adulteress may marry only an adulterer or an idolater; believers are forbidden such marriages'** 24:3.

A – Some scholars say that this verse is not talking about the Islamic ruling but is, rather, saying 'every type is attracted to its own type' or 'birds fall for their own species', since adultery is a sin like other sins. The verse, thus, according to the known ruling of our scholars, relates to adulterous people who are notorious for their adultery, not to someone for whom adultery is committed as a one-off event or similar.

H25 – What is the ruling regarding **marrying someone from the People of the Book, for both men and women**?

A – Male Muslims are allowed to marry women from the People of the Book, for Allāh the Most High says: **'and the free women from among those who were given the Book before you'** 5:5; but Muslim women are not allowed to marry men from the People of the Book. The difference between the two, as we have explained to some Christians, is that a Muslim believes in all books: the Torah, the *Injīl* (the Christian part of the Bible) and the Qur'ān, and Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. Thus when a Jewish or Christian woman lives with a Muslim (husband), he cannot slander her sacred beliefs or persons since these are sacred to him as well, and he cannot harm her Book since her Book is his: **'you believe in the entire Book'** 3:119. By contrast a Jewish man does not believe in Jesus or Muhammad, and neither the *Injīl* (the Christian part of the Bible) nor the Qur'ān, and a

Christian does not believe in the Qur'ān or Muhammad, and thus a Muslim woman who lives with a Jewish or Christian (husband) cannot protect her sacred beliefs or persons, and this is perhaps the difference in this matter.

Regarding infidels who are not Jews or Christians – whatever their infidelity – it is not allowed for a Muslim man to marry any woman that is not a Muslim or not from among the People of the Book, in neither permanent nor term/temporary marriage, and there is a consensus amongst scholars regarding this.

H26 – Is **AIDS** regarded as a shortcoming that can allow the **severing a (marriage) contract**?

A – It is not a shortcoming that can allow the severing of a (marriage) contract, since such shortcomings are limited to certain things. But if the person infected with AIDS concealed his disease from his wife, she can sever (the contract) on basis of deception (*tadlīs*). However, (scholars) who go beyond this to what would cause the spread of disease or danger may issue such ruling. There is a tendency among scholars not to allow the breaking of the contract for this very reason.

H27 – What is the obligation of the Muslim regarding his **wife if she does not abide by the Islamic dress code** even after he has tried several times without success to convince her; and what is the ruling regarding her prayers and worship?

A – His obligation is to urge her with wisdom and good advice to do what is right and to forbid her to do what is wrong (evil), and to apply gentle, clever pressures that do not create big problems; he is not obliged to divorce her if she refuses to respond to this. Regarding

her prayers and acts of worship, they are correct as long as they are done according to the guidelines.

H28 – A Muslim marries a woman from the People of the Book and she keeps her religion. What is the ruling regarding **her dress**?
A – Naturally, he should try seriously to persuade her to wear *ḥijāb*, so that she harmonizes with his Islamic atmosphere, since (failing to do) this may harm him as a believer and may harm his children in the future, and also his social Islamic atmosphere.

H29 – A father is forcing his daughter to marry a young man when she is in love with another young man. Is it allowed for this young woman to run away with that young man to marry him, especially if her father beats her up in an effort to put pressure on her to marry the young man he wants?
A – We prefer that a young woman, especially from our Eastern societies, does not marry without her family's consent, especially that of her father. This is even if some rulings *(fatāwā)* do not link a young woman's marriage to her father's permission, because such marriage may upset the young woman's life and her coming marriage, and often leads to a lot of familial and marital problems, which renders the marriage vulnerable to instability and insecurity instead of being, as is its nature, a means of achieving psychological, physical and social stability.
The parents must know that any great pressure on the young woman to choose the husband represents a non-humane situation, and that forcing her into a marriage that she does not accept may, in effect, steer her towards adultery. Fathers must fear God in this because He has not given them (tyrannical) authority in this regard.

And if we advise the girl to use different, normal ways to persuade her father to change his position, we advise the parents to listen to the girl's opinion and to discuss it with her; and if they do not succeed in convincing her, let her enter into the experience that she thinks will achieve happiness for her, without threats to disown her or not to accept responsibility for her (again) if the experience fails. This is because parents are needed to help extricate their children from any problem with minimum losses, and this is the matter of life. We want fathers and mothers to understand that their children are not a continuous part of them, even if they were part of them at the beginning of their existence. They have their own humanity, ideas and dreams, and therefore they should not oppress them in these matters.

H30 – I am a Muslim girl who observes her religious duties, and **a young man has proposed to me**. He has good morals and deep faith and attends to his religious duties as well, but **he is very poor financially** and is unable to set up house, but I am hesitant to reject him because his manners are exceptional and distinguished from other youths. What do you advise me to do, and is poverty a fundamental cause of problems?

A – Poverty is not a fundamental cause of problems, but you have to study the matter in a realistic, objective way, for a girl who has had no experience of marriage and the marital home may see things as through rose-tinted spectacles, but when she enters the marital experience its needs become real, along with new conditions that she has not experienced before. Here, problems may start between her and her husband if he cannot meet her living needs. Therefore, in such a case, the girl must study the situation so that when she enters the marriage experience she is clear about it. That said, Allāh the

Most High says: **'Take in marriage those among you who are single and those of your male and female slaves who are honest; if they are poor Allāh will enrich them from His own abundance; Allāh is Munificent and All-Knowing'** 24:32, and so poverty is not a fundamental thing in this regard as we said, for how many people were poor before Allāh made them rich? But can this girl be patient and withstand poverty or not? When the person views experience from the outside, he may think that it is simple, but when he enters it and sees things as they are, his convictions and opinions may change. There are a lot of girls and young people who see the world through rose-tinted spectacles before marriage, but once they are married they come down to earth and have to face the problems, difficulties, complications and challenges of this earth, and then they see the real picture.

My advice to young women and young men, when they decide to marry and enter marital life, is always to study matters in a realistic way, not materialistically but in a deep and objective way, and to ask themselves if they are ready to bear life's difficulties and cruelty or not. If they are ready, let them depend on God, and from Him will come their reward, help and guidance, and He will provide them in accordance with their intentions. The *ḥadīth* says: **'If someone with whom you are satisfied in terms of his religion and morals came to you (to propose to your daughters or sisters), accept him; if you do not do so, a *fitnah* and great corruption occurs on earth.'**

H31 – Civil divorce makes separation between husband and wife for a year a condition, after which divorce proceedings may take place, and so divorce takes a long time. If the two want to separate, is it allowed for **a Muslim to marry the woman** who is

divorcing **if the period of three months and ten days** (the Islamic period of abstention from marriage for a divorced woman) **has elapsed, without waiting for the court decision?** This question has two possible scenarios: the first is that both husband and wife want a divorce, and the second is that only the wife wants a divorce while the husband does not accept it.

A – Marriage with this divorced woman is not correct until after the completion of all legal proceedings that confirm that the divorce has indeed taken place. The elapse of the mentioned period is not sufficient for the validity of entering into a new contract with her, but completion of the aforementioned process is a must. And if such a contract is carried out before this, it is void; and if he actually marries (begins full sexual relations with) her she becomes forbidden to him forever, notwithstanding the difference between the two scenarios cited in the question. Also, to make the civil divorce correct (valid), the two must recognize – according to their secular affiliation – the validity of the civil contract in its regulations regarding their marital relationship and abide by it.

H32 – Is it allowed for **a woman to know her husband's affairs** and especially before marriage, and what is the ruling if the husband wants to keep these matters from his wife?

A – It is allowed for her to ask about him to know about his affairs as a means of ensuring that her choice is right, not through spying but through normal means, and others can inform her about his shortcomings as part of their advice, as this is one of the exceptions regarding backbiting (*ghibah*). The husband is also allowed to do so. However, if the enquiries are designed to learn about his past (relationships with the other sex), or in his case about her past, although this is allowed, it is not obligatory on either of them to tell

the other about it. In fact, so telling may entail a blight (negative consequence), especially if this proves to be a source of complication in their marital life, which might be negatively affected by the man's past or the woman's past; hence they should be wise regarding this.

H33 – Is the **divorce of other Islamic schools of thought** valid for a woman who follows *Ahlul Bayt* (as)?
A – If her husband is from one of these schools of thought, divorce according to their rules is valid; but if her husband also follows her school of thought and the divorce does not contain all conditions, it is void and their marriage is still in force.

H34 – Is a **divorce performed over the telephone** allowed?
A – There is no difference between a telephone divorce and a face-to-face divorce; for a divorce, the husband needs only to spell out the divorce words during a time in which the woman has not had sexual intercourse with him since her last monthly period, and there must be two just witnesses present. If we assume that he holds up a telephone handset and the witnesses are holding other handsets, the divorce is valid. The important thing in this case is that he spells out the divorce words, and that the two just witnesses hear his divorce, whether directly or through a telephone.

H35 – Is it part of good conduct and social behaviour (*birr*) on the part of the **wife to serve her in-laws**: her husband's father, mother, brother and sister? And is it part of good conduct and social behaviour to care for those in-laws, especially in the foreign lands?
A- All that is *birr*, and the person doing such good deeds will be rewarded, especially in those lands.

H36 – What is the ruling regarding **marriage between carriers of the AIDS virus**?
A- It is allowed.

H37 – What is the ruling regarding **a woman (asking for a) divorce if the husband has AIDS**?
A- The husband should divorce her if she does not want to stay with him; if he refuses she can seek the ruling of an Islamic Jurist. This is based on the supposition that her staying with him causes intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*), as is often the case.

H38 – If a Muslim knows that **he has AIDS**, is he allowed to **have sexual intercourse with his wife**? Is it obligatory for him to tell her about it?
A- He is not allowed to do anything that may lead to her contracting the disease, and she is not allowed to accept his invitation (to sexual intercourse) when infection is possible.

H39 – When can a wife request a divorce from an Islamic jurist?
May a wife ask for divorce, and get divorced on the grounds that her husband continuously treats her badly, or fails to fulfil her sexual needs, to the extent that she fears being drawn into committing prohibited acts?
A- She can request a divorce from the jurist if her husband fails in any way to meet his duties towards her, part of which is her sexual needs, and if by staying with him it causes her intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*). The jurist would order him to fulfil his duties towards her or to divorce her; if he refuses, the jurist can divorce her from him.

H40 – A Muslim woman has been **separated from her husband for some time** and does not expect to be with him in the near future, and she claims that she cannot stay without a husband due to the complexities of life in the West, including her fear that her house might be attacked or burgled, or that she might be raped. Can she **request a divorce from an Islamic jurist,** and get divorced to marry whom she wants?
A- The problem has to be solved with the husband first, by asking her to divorce her; if he refuses and the rejection comes from him, she can seek the ruling of an Islamic jurist.

H41 – A Muslim man married to a Muslim woman lived abroad for years, and his needs forced him enter into a **term marriage contract with a woman from the People of the Book days after divorcing his Muslim wife**. Is he allowed to do that when **his wife is still in the post-divorce marriage-abstention period** *('iddah)*?
A- There is no objection to this, according to our ruling.

H42 – A **legal divorce** according to the Western law has **taken place,** but the **man refuses to give up his Islamic legal right** although he does not honour the expenses of his wife, despite Islamic legal mediations. What should be the wife's stance, when her patience in such a situation would definitely lead to intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*)?
A- If he is not meeting his marital duties, the wife can request divorce by an Islamic jurist.

H43 – A **wife is not obedient to her husband,** does not fulfil her marital duties towards him, and goes without his consent to stay at her parents' for months; moreover, she seeks to affirm her rights

from a non-Islamic court instead of from Islamic jurisprudence in order to get alimony and custody of her children, in addition to a divorce. Does this wife merit marital rights according to Islamic *Shari'a*?

A- This woman does not merit them, since she has been disobedient from the Islamic legal point of view (*nāshiz*), according to the question – that is, she has not met his (her husband's) sexual right. As for the other domestic arrangements, they have to be solved by mutual agreement, since these are not part of her duties from the Islamic angle. Obeying his orders in things other than his sexual needs, even if she is in the house (is not part of his rights over her), therefore he has no rights in this regard.

H44 – In some European countries a daughter has the right to be financially independent from her father and to live on her own after she becomes sixteen or eighteen years old; she becomes independent in her affairs, and when she consults her father or mother she does so to get an opinion or as a mere courtesy. Does **a virgin woman** in such circumstances have the right to get **married without the permission of her father**, whether it be a temporary/term or a permanent marriage?

A- She is allowed to do so if she has reached the Islamically legal age (*bāligha*) and is mentally responsible (*rashīdah*), since her father has no authority over her, even in marriage.

H45 – A man entered into a marriage contract with a woman and **travelled before actually marrying her; she stayed in this situation for three years**, and no sexual intercourse took place between them throughout this period. She does not know his address, and knows that during that period he has returned to his

country, married another woman and then travelled away, just as he did the first time round. This woman wants a divorce; what is the ruling – noting that there is no way by which she can reach him or find his address?

A- She should turn to an Islamic judge to undertake the divorce procedure.

H46 – The laws in many countries do not make it obligatory for the husband to meet the expenses of his wife, as they treat the wife independently, and on this basis the **state give benefit (welfare) to the refugee wife** as it does to the refugee husband. Does the wife have the right to receive and own the benefit allocated for her, and **would her maintenance remain the responsibility of her husband in spite of this**, noting that when the state calculates benefit it does so on the basis of the minimum amount with which the person can meet his or her expenses and no more?

A- The wife has the right to receive her benefit but her maintenance remains the responsibility of the husband, unless they agree otherwise.

H47 – Would an **adulterous woman have to observe an *'iddah*** (period after divorce where the woman must abstain from marriage or sexual intercourse) if the adulterous man who committed the act of adultery with her, or another man, wanted to marry her?

A- There is no *'iddah* for her.

(I) Money Matters

I1 – Is it allowed to put **money in non-Islamic banks**, even if you choose an interest-bearing account?
A – Not allowed if you choose to receive interest, but allowed without it.

I2 – Is it allowed to **exchange one currency for another** according to its market value?
A – It is allowed.

I3 – What is the ruling regarding dealing with **forged currency**?
A – Absolutely not allowed.

I4 – What is the ruling regarding buying **lottery tickets** and similar things?
A – It is allowed.

I5 – Is it obligatory to pay the ***khums* (20% Islamic levy) on wages** (payments) that are transferred from the government to a person directly to the bank?
A – Paying the *khums* on them is obligatory.

I6 – **The lottery** is (a kind of) betting; when is it allowed *(ḥalāl)*?
A – We do not regard the lottery as a kind of betting, therefore there is no problem in dealing with it.

I7 – What is the ruling regarding **buying lottery tickets** in the West **for personal benefit, or to support Islamic projects** if the tickets win?

A – No objection to this, provided that it does not involve a forbidden thing at the secondary level (*'unwān thānewiyy*).

I8 – What is the ruling regarding Muslims joining **interest-based schemes with Western banks**, under which they agree with the banks that their money is held as shares yielding profit only, not loss?
A – It is not allowed to participate in any interest-based venture.

I9 – Is it allowed to invest in **the shares and bonds of American companies**?
A – There is no objection to this, because we have not issued a *fatwā* forbidding investing in American companies – unless the investments relate to forbidden things or dealings. However, we advise (Muslims) to boycott American companies if this does not lead to harm to Muslims, or if there are alternatives in other non-enemy states.

I10 – Assuming it is allowed in the above question, is it allowed to **invest in shares of these companies if they (the companies) invest part of their money in American treasury bonds**?
A – There is no objection to this on the above-mentioned condition.

I11 – We **work in government and private companies** and all of them take taxes from employees at a certain percentage – this is a general law that covers the whole country, whether the enterprise is small or big. Is there **any Islamic legal problem (*ishkāl*) in paying taxes** through these companies, taking note that abstention from paying them will prevent an individual from working?
A – There is no problem since the general law conforms to the condition included in the contract.

I12 – A person borrows 100 German Marks on condition that he is to return them after one month as 100 US Dollars. If 170 German Marks equals 100 US Dollars, is this allowed or it is ***ribā*** **(interest/usury)**?
A – It is *ribā* (usury) if it is a question of adhering to a contract or agreement; it seems that selling (*bay'*) is not affected in this way.

I13 – What is the legitimacy of getting money from **insurance companies by burning or destroying an insured item**?
A – It is not allowed.

I14 – What about **not paying money owed to lending companies**; is it allowed to join them (borrow from them), given that they take interest when the amount is not paid back in full?
A – It is not allowed.

I15 – Is it obligatory on us **not to pay interest**?
A – There is no problem in not paying interest, rather it is not allowed.

I16 – What is the ruling regarding **borrowing from banks in Britain with interest**? Sometimes borrowing takes place without dire need that is a matter of life or death, but, for instance, to cover the expenses of travelling to see the family in another country, or to buy furniture, or for marriage and the like.
A – The principle is that borrowing with interest is forbidden because it is *ribā*. The borrower can make it his intention not to borrow with interest as a condition of the contract, between him and God; instead he means to pay off the same amount as the loan, but he pays the interest, when due to the bank, under legal compulsion,

and so he may feel comfortable when paying the interest, and in this way borrowing on this basis is allowed.

I17 – Payments (made by Social Security) to a husband and wife are paid monthly, and for children every three months, and the payments to the husband and wife are sufficient for the whole family including children. Is it allowed for the **father to use the children's payments**?

A – If the authority making the payments, is giving it to the children not to the father for his children's care, the father has to keep them for his children or spend them for them, and he is not allowed to spend these funds for himself; rather, he must make his expenditure for his children from these funds, and use them to buy clothes for them, things required for school or anything that they need, so he is not obliged to spend his own money on them but theirs. But if money is left over from their (allocated) payments, he must keep it for them, and if he needs it he should take it as a loan which he must spend on them if they need it.

I18 – Is it allowed **to give some of the alms given in the name of the Imams** of *Ahlul Bayt* (as), such as Imam al-Ḥusaīn (as), **to one's neighbour** when it is not known whether the neighbour is religious or not?

A – In these matters, one has to give one's alms to those among the needy believers who deserve them.

I19 – (But) **if there are none of these living near us**, what shall we do?

A – If a person wants to remind those who are around him about al-Ḥusaīn (as) or the anniversary, then this can be seen as a kind of

propaganda for, and an expression of loyalty, to al-Ḥusaīn (as), and so others will ask: 'Who is al-Ḥusaīn and who are *Ahlul Bayt*?' and so this becomes an opportunity to explain this, and so there is no objection.

I20 – A lot of us are **able to go on the pilgrimage** since we are able to do so financially, but a lot of us **have families and relatives who are in need of the money**. To which (of these options) should we give priority?

A – If the time of pilgrimage arrives and a person is financially able and there is no intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*) in spending the money there are two priorities: either he can take care of the family (and relatives) and go on the pilgrimage (as well), or he will not be able to take care of the family who are in his circle of responsibility if he spends the money on pilgrimage. If the pilgrimage time arrives and he has money to go on the pilgrimage, but if he does so his family (and relatives) will become hungry or be placed in difficulty, and he is unable to take care of their needs from other funds, then pilgrimage is not obligatory on him.

I21 – Is it allowed to **spend financial assistance given to cultural societies or Islamic societies on Ḥusaīniyy events**, because we cannot mention (when presenting our requests for such assistance) that these funds will be used for such purposes?

A – If this financial support is given to a society (for spending) on its events and activities without conditions, and Ḥusaīniyy and Islamic events are part of its activities, there is no objection.

I22 – Your Eminence issued a *fatwā* regarding **the *khums*** (the 20% tax): that is to **give the Imam's share** (*ḥaqq al-Imām*) **without the**

permission of the Islamic Jurist (*al-ḥākim ash-shar'iyy*), and this *fatwā* is special **for the oppressed Iraqi people**. Does this ruling include: (a) the Iraqi who lives in a place of emigration and sends the Imam's part to the needy inside Iraq? And (b) the Iraqi who lives in a place of emigration and gives this money to the poor Iraqis living there? And is it allowed to spend money from the Imam's part on courses teaching the Holy Qur'ān?

A – There is no objection to Iraqis living in places of emigration paying half of the Islamic legal money tax – the *khums* from the Imam's share –to poor Iraqis, both inside and outside Iraq, or for courses teaching the Holy Qur'ān, on the condition that this is done with half (of the amount) only; the rest should be sent to us to spend on Islamic projects, endeavours to spread Islam, and religious schools.

I23 – I am a man living in America, and I have some money with which **I bought shares** in some companies, which I do not intend to sell at present. These shares are subject to both profit and loss. Is the money with which I bought the **shares subject to the *khums*** (the 20% tax)?

A – Since this money is capital, and you have bought shares with it, it is natural that it should be subject to the *khums*, and you have to pay their *khums* when the annual date (of the *khums*) (*ra's as-sanah*) arrives.

I24 – What is your opinion regarding the ***khums* on money in banks**, especially given that this is an area of (common) test (*maḥal ibtilā'*) to most of our brothers in Western countries? What is the ruling:

(a) if the money is in a deposit account?

(b) if it is debit and credit (i.e. current account)?

(c) if there is an annual date for access(fixed deposit *wādi'ah*)?
And what is the ruling of Sayyid al-Kho'iyy in this?
A – Sayyid al-Kho'iyy has a problem with these, since if the banks are governmental the money is of an unknown owner. Yes, if it is credited with the permission of the Islamic Jurist (*al-ḥākim ash-shar'*iyy) and without the condition of interest, it can be taken, since the *ḥadith* says: **'The *ribā* (interest) emerges from the condition; it is corrupted by conditions.'**
We see that there is no difference between money that is held in credit in banks – whether governmental or private –and money that is transferred to the account of another person, even if it is his salary, when it becomes his possession and the *khums* becomes obligatory. Regarding interest, if you have not made it a condition and have not entered into an agreement with the bank about it, then there is no problem in obtaining it.

I25 – What is the ruling regarding the payment of **life insurance after the death** of an insured person: is this regarded as part of the inheritance?
A – If the agreement with the insurance company was to pay the amount to the wife of the dead, his children or certain people, for instance, this money is not part of the inheritance, but a possession of the person named (in the policy) during the life of the insured person.

I26 – Is the **pension paid to the wife after her husband's death** to be included as part of the inheritance that must be divided between the inheritors, or it is a right belonging to the person who receives it?

A – The pensions law must be obeyed in this matter: if it states that the amount is to be paid to the inheritors, then it must be paid as inheritance; otherwise it must be paid to whoever the law decides.

I27 – My father-in-law died and left **inheritance** comprising a piece of land and some money. My brother-in-law (my wife's brother) said that my wife should not get any inheritance except her portion of the money, but she has no right to the land. Is this true?
A – The known ruling is that the wife does not inherit property – neither itself nor its value, but she can inherit what is on it, such as buildings, trees, equipment etc, and in value not in itself. But the obligatory precautionary ruling (*aḥwaṭ wujūban*) is agreement between the wife and the rest of inheritors. However, this does not apply to your wife since she is the daughter of the dead person and the daughter inherits a share of everything her father has left, property or otherwise, and in itself not in value.

I28 – I used to own some **shares**, and by the time my annual financial date (for the *khums*) arrived their value had increased, but **I did not pay the *khums***. Now, their value has gone down. Should I pay the *khums* according to their present value?
A – You must pay the *khums* according to the higher value at the due date.

I29 – What is your ruling regarding ***zakāt* (tax): is it obligatory on money** or not? If it is obligatory, why is it not being paid, given that this is what is stated in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*?
A – Our ruling is that it is an obligatory precaution *(iḥtiyāṭ wujūbiyy)* to pay it on money.

I30 – Is **investing the Islamic revenues** (*huqūq shar'iyyah*) – the Imām's share and the Prophet's descendants' (*as-Sādah*) share – **in guaranteed investments** to achieve growth in the money – with the permission of the representative of the *marj'* – allowed when there is no significant and urgent need to spend it? If this is allowed, should the money-distribution categories of the profit be the same as those of the aforementioned share, or can it be spent in a wider area, such as general charity?

A- This is allowed with the permission of the *marj'* or his representative, assuming that there is a benefit in this, as the question implies. As for the profit that arises, it is not part of the revenue and so it can be spent on general charity.

I31 – Is it allowed **to give Islamic revenues** from the *khums* and *zakāt* **to any *marj'***, or must it be given to the *marj'* being followed *(marj' at-taqlīd),* or to the most knowledgeable of them if the one being followed is dead?

A- It is a precaution (*aḥwaṭ*) to give it to the *marj'* at the secondary-level basis (of the ruling) (*'inwān ath-thānewiyy*).

I32 – In the West, there are cases in which the **government pays the rent for a tenant**, and so guarantees his accommodation.

(a) **If he buys a house** whilst still under that situation (i.e. the rent is still being paid by the government), is this house considered extra and so the *khums* on it must be paid?

(b) If is extra, is it possible for him **to terminate the government's rent for his rented house** and live temporarily in the house that he has bought, so that the *khums* is cancelled, then to leave it again to go to another house for which the government pays the rent, and to rent the house that he has bought?

(c) **If he registers the house under another person's** name but lives in it (as a tenant), is he allowed to take the rental that the government pays to the landlord, who is the one under whose name he has registered the house?

A- (a) Whether the *khums* is obligatory or not depends on the need to live in the house that he buys; it seems that its *khums* is obligatory, according to the implications of the question.

(b) If the person has no real need (for the house), he must pay its *khums* after using it as described, because the usage has no implication on its own when not considered a vital need.

(c) There is no difference in the obligatory status of the *khums* when there is no case of need, and he cannot take the money in question in these circumstances.

I33 – Every employee or worker in a governmental or private company has a small **amount deducted from his monthly salary for pensions**, and when he reaches the age of retirement he starts to receive a monthly pensions salary. If the employee or worker resigns, he can ask the pensions fund to give him the money due to him for the years of his employment. Is the *khums* automatically due on this money when it is received, or should it be scrutinized to see whether it is in addition to his yearly provision (*ma'ūnat sanatih*) and so will or will not be subject to *khums* accordingly?

A- Since such income is derived from a sort of tax that is not part of the employee's or worker's possessions, then he is not obliged to pay its *khums* until one year has elapsed after he receives it.

I34 – Some students who wish to **continue their university studies get a loan from the government at fixed interest**, and without this loan they will be unable, or will find it difficult, to continue their

studies. What is the ruling regarding taking this loan with that interest?
A- It is allowed to take it, with the understanding that the student is not paying the interest, but that he will (later) be forced to pay it when requested.

(J) Trade-related Matters

J1 – Is it allowed for the Muslim to **join Jews or Christians in permitted (allowed) trade** activities?
A – This is allowed if, in the case of Jews, it does not include strengthening the Zionist Entity (Israel).

J2– Is it allowed to buy **goods from countries that are fighting Islam** and Muslims?
A – This is not allowed except in cases of the Muslims' compelling need, where boycotting would be more harmful to Muslims than to the others.

J3 – Is it allowed for the Muslim **to permit another person to use his name**, and to benefit from his good credentials, **in order to buy shares** in banks, companies etc, in return for a sum of money on which they agree?
A – If this is considered normal (in that society), then it is allowed.

J4 – What is the ruling regarding **buying and selling dogs**?
A – It is allowed for the types that are permitted (allowed), such as dogs used for hunting and guarding.

J5 – Is it allowed **to buy merchandise from Jewish, or Masonic companies** that are linked to the Zionist Entity (Israel) indirectly or in a direct, open way?
A – It is not allowed to buy merchandise from companies that strengthen the Zionist Entity.

J6 – In Western countries, is it allowed **to buy goods that the government has confiscated from merchants** who could not pay their taxes?
A – It is not allowed to buy such goods unless an (Islamic) legal judge has been consulted or unless the permission of their owners has been obtained.

J7 – Is it allowed **to sell films that contain lewd scenes**, or that show non-Islamic ideas and cultures?
A – It is not allowed to deal with these or sell them if this leads to atmospheres that harm belief or promote moral corruption and deviation.

J8 – Is it allowed **to buy stolen goods but of unknown ownership**?
A – Referral to an (Islamic) legal judge is a must regarding goods of unknown ownership, to obtain his permission to buy or deal with them.

J9 – LDA **markets** are widespread in Germany, and are the cheapest markets for buying foods, but their **owner is Jewish**. Is it allowed to buy from them?
A – If it is known that he is not a supporter of the Zionist Entity (Israel), it is allowed.

J10 – What is the ruling regarding **using credit cards**, such as Visa and Mastercard, which British banks give to their customers in return for a small annual fee, and sometimes it is free. Using this card, one can buy what one needs (without instant payment) and also borrow money for a certain period without interest – this period varies, according to the bank, between 28 and 60 days. If the period elapses and the cardholder has not paid back what he owes, the bank adds interest at a certain rate, which (again) differs according to the period of repayment. Given that these cards are very useful, especially in emergencies, what is the ruling?

A – There is no problem in using them. However, the Muslim, when he enters into the contract, must not intend to pay interest in return for going over the time period, so that if this time period does (actually) elapse, his payment of the interest can be counted as a compelling case (*iḍṭirār*).

J11 – What is the ruling regarding **buying a house or business with a loan from the bank** which here in Britain is called a **'mortgage'**? By this method, the cost of the property is paid by the bank instead of the buyer, at a rate of interest calculated according to the value of the property and time period of the loan (around 20 years), and the buyer pays back the loan by monthly repayments to the bank. (What is the ruling), given that properties here are very expensive and most people cannot afford to pay the cost of the property in one go without a bank loan?

A – The answer is the same as that of the previous question, if the person does not take the loan in terms of interest.

J12 – Is it allowed to work in **the black market**?

A – Allāh says: **'But whoever is compelled through necessity, intending neither to sin nor to transgress, shall incur no guilt'** 2:173. However, I do not wish for my brethren to violate the rules and regulations; but rather that in expatriate places they should be a true image of individuals who represent discipline (and law abiding), qualities which will make others respect them.

J13 – Is it allowed **to buy shares from banks that deal with *ribā*** (interest)?
A – If the shares are the bank's it is not allowed.

J14 - What is the ruling regarding **copyright and ownership of ideas and intellectual property** for: audio recordings, (written) works, articles, books, computer software, drawings, designs (clothes, jewellery, décor and architecture, and containers, packaging and symbols for trade produce) and the like under a legal or illegal Muslim ruler, or a non-Muslim ruler?
A – Trespassing on the rights of others is not allowed. So it is not allowed to make copies or forge books or similar works that are regarded as a possession of their owner, except for personal use, and provided that this does not cause any harm to the author or the owner of the rights. There is no difference in any of the three situations in the question.

J15 – The company for which I work asked me **to buy a piece of merchandise at a certain price**, but **I bought it at a lower price**. Is it allowed to keep the difference between the two prices?
A – It is not allowed for you to do so because you are acting on behalf of the company, and a person in such a position must charge

the company the amount he paid even if it was less (than the full price).

J16 – Is it allowed to **duplicate tapes without their owners' permission**? Is there a difference between doing this for trade or for personal use?
A – It is not allowed to use borrowed tapes, even for copying. Yes, if we suppose that you have taken the recordings from a microphone, or from people who are not their owners, then it is allowed if for personal use. However, copying tapes for trading purposes is not allowed if they have a price.

J17 – Some Muslims **sell handwritten (calligraphic) copies of the Holy Qur'ān** that they bring from Muslim countries. Is this allowed?
A- It is allowed. It is better if it is understood that only the cover and paper are being sold, although this is not obligatory.

J18 – Is it allowed **to trade in Islamic handwritten (calligraphic) books, artefacts and items of heritage**, if this means taking them out of their countries of origin to be sold at high prices in European countries, for instance. Or this is considered to constitute the dissipation of Islamic wealth, and hence not allowed?
A- It is allowed if the seller owns these items, although it is better to study the matter in regard to the general interests of Muslims and their needs for tourism and the like – something which can strengthen a country and its attractions.

J19 – A **Muslim printer in the West prints a food menu** for a restaurant which includes pork dishes. Is he allowed to do so? And is he allowed to print marketing materials for shops that sell alcohol, or

shops that sell other forbidden goods, if he claims that his work will be detrimentally affected if he refrains from printing such materials?
A- It is obligatory precaution (*aḥwaṭ wujūban*) to abstain from this, except in cases of harm (*ḍarar*) or intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*).

J20 – In buying and selling, when the market is stable, is making a profit that is double the purchase price allowed? And what is the **definition of unacceptably high (*fāḥish*) profit**?
A- It is allowed, but the buyer has the right to break the contract if he discovers that his purchase was made at a price that is higher than the market price by an unacceptable margin.

(K) Music and Singing

K1 – When is **listening to music** allowed?
A – It is allowed to listen to music which does not stir lust, nor contributes to moral deviation.

K2 – What do you mean by **music or singing conforming to (useless) leisure gatherings (*majālis al-lahu*)**?
A – It arouses (forbidden) instincts and lusts.

K3 – Is it allowed **to go to places where a music of an allowed type is played**?
A – It is allowed, provided that it is not accompanied by any other forbidden thing.

K4 – Is it allowed **to learn how to play an allowed type of music in music institutes**?

A – It is allowed.

K5 – What is the ruling regarding **listening to songs of longing for the homeland**, especially if they do not contain forbidden things?
A – It is allowed.

K6 – Is it allowed for **women to dance in front of women, with or without music**; and is there a forbidden kind of dancing?
A – It is allowed with allowed types of music, but not allowed with forbidden types of music. Forbidden dancing concerns men dancing with women, or dancing which involves lewd moves.

K7 – In Western countries, there are **lessons in which the art of dancing is taught**. It is not accompanied by singing, nor is it for leisure, but is part of the educational syllabus. What is the ruling regarding attending these lessons?
A – It is allowed.

K8 – Is the **music broadcast on radio and TV** Islamically allowed?
A – It is not allowed if it relates to atmospheres of (useless) leisure and ecstasy (from such music) or if it is regarded as the music of corrupt people (*alḥān ahlil fusūq*), but otherwise it is allowed.
K9 – When is **singing** forbidden, and when is it not?
A – When the words that are sung harm morals and chasteness, and encourage obscenity and lewdness, and the music is such that it stirs lust, then it is forbidden, otherwise it is allowed.

K10 – Is it allowed **to work in non-Muslim radio stations**?
A – It is allowed, on condition that the Muslim does not present a forbidden thing or does not do a forbidden deed.

K11 – Some **songs stir** in us – when listening to them – **painful and sorrowful emotions because they remind us of our families, homeland and suffering**, and often they make us cry; are they forbidden?
A – They are not forbidden if the words do not contain falsehoods, but express real feelings of longing.

K12 – Is it allowed **to manufacture, sell and buy musical instruments** if they are intended **for children's leisure**? And are adults allowed to use them?
A- It is allowed.

(L) Medical Matters

L1 – Medical scientists have succeeded in **transplanting a heart and other parts from pigs into the human body**, and the al-Azhar scholars have allowed this. Do you declare it allowable?
A – Yes, this is allowed. And if the pig's organ becomes an organ of that human being, it becomes like any of his original organs, since it is eating pig's meat that is forbidden not implanting some of its organs in the human body, especially in compelling cases.

L2 – If it is not possible for an embryo to live inside a woman's womb, doctors can take an egg from her and semen from her husband and carry out **in-vitro (in the test tube) fertilization; then the fertilized egg can be planted inside the womb of another woman**. When the baby is born, **whose baby is he**, and what are the rights of each of the two women?
A – There is a difference in opinion: Sayyid al-Kho'iyy believed that the mother is the surrogate mother, since Allāh says: **'their mothers**

are those only who gave birth to them' 58:2, i.e. the one who gives birth is the mother, not the egg-owner. But another opinion, which Sayyid as-Sīstāniyy and myself see more true to this case, is that the egg-owner is the true (biological) mother not the surrogate mother, for although the baby lived in her womb, she did not produce him; rather, the people who produced the baby are the owners of the sperm and the egg. According to the specialists, the baby is created from the sperm plus the egg, and thus the baby is related to both the sperm and the egg.

As for the verse **'their mothers are those only who gave birth to them'**, this is presented as an additional exclusion to disprove *dhahār*, which is the statement of a man who says to his wife: 'You are to me as my mother's back' (so that he will not contact her sexually, as a kind of punishment; the first part of the verse is: **'Those of you who divorce their wives by declaring them to be their mothers should know that they are not their mothers'**). So the verse says that the mother is not the woman to whom such *dhahār* is done, but is rather the one who has given birth to him, since this was the case for absolutely all human beings at that time. Therefore, the verse is not about naming the woman who gives birth as the mother on an abstract level, since such cases did not exist at all then, and were not even a part of human awareness, for no one knew the relationship between motherhood and the egg; God is all-Knowing.

We believe that this opinion is nearer to the truth. However, the surrogate mother may be an unmarriageable woman (i.e. one of the *maḥārim*), since if breastfeeding exceeds 15 times or is one which 'makes flesh build and bones strengthen' makes the breastfeeding woman unmarriageable, it goes without saying that flesh-building and bone-strengthening for a baby who lives in a women's womb and feeds from her blood for nine months represent more than what

comes from breastfeeding. However, this matter is not so final that we can issue a *fatwā* to make absolute the state of 'unmarriageability' of the breastfeeding-related kind.

L3 – In **genetic engineering**, some scientists claim that they are capable of improving the human race through work on genes, by: (a) **banishing the occurrence of ugliness**; (b) **inserting beautiful alternative features**, (c) achieving both these things simultaneously. Are scientists allowed to do so? And is the Muslim allowed to ask doctors to improve his hereditary genes?
A- It is allowed.

L4 – Is it allowed **to donate a living organ to a living person**, such as a kidney, and **to donate an organ through a will to be transplanted from a dead person to a living person**, whether from the Muslim to the non-Muslim or vice versa? And is this matter different when considering different organs?
A- It is allowed provided that harm (*ḍarar*) is unlikely, notably future harm for the living donor. As for a will involving transplants from a dead person, it is absolutely allowed.

L5 – Some **hereditary diseases** are transferred from fathers to children and are considered a danger to their future life. Modern science has devised a method **to avoid some of these diseases by** the fertilisation of the woman's egg inside a test tube (**in-vitro fertilisation**), where the (resulting) **embryos** are examined and the **healthy ones are chosen**, then implanted inside the woman's womb, while **the remainder are destroyed**. Is this operation Islamically allowed?

A- It is allowed as a matter of principle, provided that the embryo does not become a living embryo before it is destroyed.

L6 – **In-vitro fertilisation** may produce many embryos at the same time and implanting all of them inside the mother's womb can be dangerous to her life, or even fatal. Is it allowed **to choose one embryo and to destroy the rest**?
A- It is allowed, taking into account the answer to the previous question.

L7 – What is the ruling regarding the **quarantining of an AIDS patient** – does he have to put himself in quarantine? And is his family obliged to put him in quarantine?
A- Quarantining is obligatory for him; also, it is forbidden for others to do anything that might lead to their catching the disease.

L8 – What is the ruling regarding **abortion by pregnant women who have AIDS**?
A- Abortion is not allowed when no harm (*ḍarar*) is foreseen in her continuing in her pregnancy.

L9 – What is the ruling regarding the **custody and breastfeeding of a healthy baby by a mother with AIDS**?
A- There is no objection, provided that no harm comes to the baby.

L10 – Is **selling a woman's eggs** allowed? Is **buying them** allowed?
A- It is an obligatory precaution (*aḥwaṭ wujūban*) to abstain from doing this.

L11 – There is talk of the possibility of **cloning some human body parts** and preserving them as a reserve for the person or for others when needed; is this allowed? And does allowing this **include the sexual organs or not**, since they are attributed to the person and cannot be exposed, for instance? Also regarding brain cloning – is it allowed?
A- There are no objections to this.

L12 – What is your ruling regarding **transplanting one testis** from a fertile person to a sterile one who needs a testis, assuming that the surgical operation will be a success? And to whom would **the fatherhood of the embryo** be ascribed?
A- This kind of transplant is allowed; the father is the owner of the sperm, and this is the second man, since the testis is only a means to produce sperms that depend on other factors such as nutrition; and Allah is the all-Knowing.

L13 – A woman becomes pregnant and the **embryo reaches six months**, and it is proved by X-ray examination that it is **completely deformed** and the doctors say that it would die when born, and that as long as it remains inside his mother's womb abnormal fluids would be form inside her, something which medicine has proved to be dangerous to her. In this case, **is abortion obligatory or not?**
A- Since by remaining in her womb the baby will endanger her life, as the question says, abortion is allowed in such a case.

L14 – Regarding the **person who is brain-dead**, is **donating his organs to patients** who are in dire need of them allowed, in the following cases:

(a) If **he had written a will** expressing the desire to donate his organs, whether his family accept this or not?
(b) If **his family wants** to do so for money, i.e. organ selling, but it is not known whether the person himself accepts this or not?
(c) If **the doctor does this** without the knowledge of the family of the patient?
A-
(a) It is allowed.
(b) It is not allowed.
(c) He (the doctor) is not allowed to do so because he does not have the authority.

(M) Miscellaneous Issues

M1 – If a **month's new moon** (crescent) is confirmed (i.e. beginning of the month) in the East, should it, following this, be declared in the West (as the beginning of the month)?
A – Only if the (second) country shares a common part of the night with the East, can the first moon be confirmed.

M2 – If the believer managed to save money **to go on pilgrimage** this year, but **he could not get a visa**, does he have to keep this money for next year?
A – If he does not need the money to spend on his needs till next year, and knows that he will get the visa next year, he must keep the money as a precaution (*aḥwaṭ*). However, if he is obliged to spend the money during the year on his normal needs, then he is allowed to spend it.

M3 – You say that **the beard** may be shaved. What is the meaning of your saying: 'It is the symbol or sign of believers (*shi'ār al-mu'minīn*)?'
A – It means that leaving it (unshaved) is recommended (*mustaḥabb*) – take note of this label – since the (Muslim) norm throughout history has always been not to shave, making it (the beard) a symbol or sign for believers by which can be recognized; moreover, precaution (*iḥtiyāṭ*) requires this.

M4 – Is it allowed **to play card games** – of any kind – on the computer **without betting**; and is it allowed with betting?
A – Card games with betting are not allowed, but are allowed without betting.

M5 – Some Western-manufactured machines, called **flippers or pin-ball machines**, are manufactured for leisure **not betting**; a coin is inserted into it and the machine is electrically driven so that the player can operate the balls. The problem, however, is that they are found **in public places which mostly corrupt people visit**. Is playing with these machines allowed or not?
A – From the point of view of principle, it is allowed to play with them. However, regarding the atmosphere, it becomes forbidden (*ḥarām*) or recommended not (*makrūh*) to play with them depending on the forbidden or undesirable consequences when judged on a secondary-level basis (*al-'unwān ath-thānewiyy*).

M6 – Are **walking and leisure in parks and theme parks** allowed, given that a lot of them include singing and music?
A – It is not allowed to be in atmospheres that include forbidden (types of) singing or music, except if it is a question of hearing (*samā'*), but not listening (*istimā'*).

M7 – How about **giving newly-born babies foreign names?**
A – It is better not to do so because it points to weakness in the Islamic personality.

M8 – Is it allowed or forbidden **to play chess** if it does not involve betting?
A – Allowed according to our opinion. However, the precaution (*iḥtiyāṭ*) should not be ignored.

M9 – Is it allowed to touch without ablution **the exalted names of Allāh and the names of the infallibles that are written in languages other than Arabic**, or **to throw them into rubbish bins**?
A – It seems that they may be touched without ablution, although it is precautionary (advisable) not to do so with the exalted names of Allāh. However, throwing them in the rubbish is not allowed if this leads to dishonouring them.

M10 – What is the ruling regarding the **'dish' (satellite television)** in America and Europe, if care is taken to choose programmes that are not unacceptable Islamically? And what is the ruling regarding subscription to 'cable' television that broadcasts Arabic programmes especially, and if the refugee needs to listen/watch to news programmes and Islamic programmes?
A – It is allowed, provided that care is taken regarding what is forbidden for him or his family.

M11 – What is the ruling regarding **selling magazines** that contain pages **showing photographs of completely nude men and**

women, and photographs focusing on the *'awrah* (the sexual organs and the anus), and bodies shown in different ways and poses?
A – If these are published as scientific magazines and show photographs of nude men and women not to induce excitement, but in a scientific way to study man's organs and physique, then there is no objection to buying them. Yes, if these magazines are sex magazines that corrupt morals, then selling them is forbidden, because they rank among the books that make people go astray.

M12 – I work as a **taxi driver in a Western country**, and my job involves **taking drunken people** from pubs to their homes, and sometimes from their homes to pubs.
A – Regarding taking them from pubs to their homes, it is allowed. However, taking them from their homes to pubs is not allowed as a precautionary ruling; but allowing this has a valid standpoint as well.

M13 – When there are **traffic signs and regulations in streets**, is it Islamically obligatory to abide by them?
A – It is absolutely not allowed to violate traffic signs, even in the late hours of the night and on empty streets, because there is a possibility that a car may (for example) suddenly come through a green light, which may lead – even if the chance is remote – to harm to souls and property. Thus it is forbidden to violate traffic regulations, because the violation of these may lead to the above-mentioned negative consequences.

M14 – In some places there are **regulations such as No Smoking or (Throw) No Cigarette Ends or No Noise etc.** Is it Islamically obligatory to adhere to these regulations?

A – It is not allowed to violate the regulations posted in offices, on public transport, in cars, aeroplanes, or shops, whether they concern abstaining from smoking or throwing away cigarette ends, because allowing this is subject to the acceptance of these places' owners or supervisors or caretakers, and if they do not accept it then such behaviour is forbidden.

M15 – What is the ruling regarding **using some things in governmental and private sector offices**, if no harm (*ḍarar*) shall be done to the employee and even it may be with the knowledge of the work supervisor, such as using telephones, using electricity to boil water for tea, or using typewriters to print [private] papers for the employee or his friends? And if your Eminence's ruling is that the state is an unknown owner (*majhūlat al-mālik*), should the employee refer to your representative (*wakīl*) regarding the use of these things, or can you make it allowable in an absolute sense? This is because this matter falls within the area of the (common) test (*maḥal ibtilā'*).

A – These uses are not allowed if they have not been permitted as part of the employee's job. We rule that the state's property does belong to a known owner; but even if the ownership is unknown we do not give permission for its use, except in cases of necessity, because of the blights (harm causing or spoiling things) that they may consequently cause.

M16 – If a **shop sells alcoholic beverages**, is it allowed to buy allowed things from it, or not?

A – It is not allowed from the standpoint of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil), if this becomes a means to stop

the shopkeeper selling forbidden things through boycotting him and switching to buying from others.

M17 – A young Muslim woman graduated from university as a **bank accountant** and she knows that **she is going to add bank interest to loans**, and it is known that banks deal with usury (*ribâ*) transactions. Is it allowed for her to work in the bank, or should she stay at home?

A – Since the accountant is regarded as a fundamental part of bank's work and cooperates with the other parties dealing directly with usury transactions, her work as an accountant will not, thus, be void of a (Islamic legal) problem, even prohibition. Her work that is included in the bank transactions may be an example of His saying: **'but do not help one another in sin'** 5:2, and since the gracious questioner has specialized in accountancy, she could work with her specialization in jobs that need accountancy other than bank jobs.

M18 – If **pilgrimage** becomes obligatory but the time **coincides with my university examinations**, and going on pilgrimage means losing one educational year, something which will cause intense financial as well as non-material difficulty (*ḥaraj*), what is the Islamic ruling on this?

A – Pilgrimage is not obligatory with such intense difficulty.

M19 – What is your advice regarding **backbiting (*ghībah*)**, and what is God's punishment for it?

A – Backbiting is the food of Hell's dogs! This means that any person who commits it becomes one of Hell's dogs, and whosoever wishes to end up like this let him indulge in backbiting against people, especially against scholars, since there are a lot of people who

think that backbiting against scholars is allowed. In the narrations of the Messenger of God (sawa) and the Imams of *Ahlul Bayt* (as), **'Backbiting is worse than adultery'** since adultery may be forgiven by God if the person repents, but backbiting is not forgiven by God unless the person offended against forgives it. This is why the Qur'ān presents backbiting like this: **'would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Surely you would loathe it'** 49:12. It is a revolting image: imagine your brother dead, and you bring a knife at lunchtime and cut off his flesh and start eating it. Is there an image worse than that?! This is the image of the backbiter. Moreover, we have to remember always that backbiting is a grand sin (*kabīrah*), and any person who commits it deserves to enter Hell.

M20 – Some of our brothers in the countries of emigration **carry out illegal acts, such as cheating, forging and forbidden acts.** Is it allowed for us to eat at these brothers' houses when we know that their income includes gains from such forbidden things?
A – If the food is known to be derived from that forbidden money then it is not allowed. But if your host has bought the food by credit or using other money then it is allowed. (Moreover,) forbidding them to do what is wrong (evil) is a must.

M21 – You issue a lot **of rulings on the basis of the 'obligation to preserve public order'.** Is **protecting the environment** related to this obligation to preserve public order in society, and so becomes an Islamic obligation? Otherwise this ruling becomes sketchy, too open to different explanations and interpretations, making it difficult to have a jurisprudence foundation based on it.
A – Yes, it is not allowed to cause harm to the environment, because this leads to harm to others as far as health is concerned, or harm to

private or public ownership. Therefore, it is not accepted to burn (car) tyres in a protest, for example, or to stick advertisements on other people's property without their permission, or to scatter rubbish and expose peoples' health to danger, or to throw poisons into rivers or seas etc, or to hunt during the reproduction seasons of animals and fish.

Regarding the claim that the base of preserving public order is flexible and subject to different interpretations, this does not stop us from referring to it, because confirming the things on which public order depends is a matter for specialists.

M22 – What is the ruling regarding the **work of a Muslim lawyer in a Muslim society in a country which is governed by non-Islamic laws**?

A – If the lawyer ensures that the cases he is defending conform to the Islamic *Shari'ah*, he is allowed to do so; but if they do not conform to it – such as if the *Shari'ah* says that a person is to be convicted but he wants him to be acquitted – in this case he is not allowed to do so.

M23 – Regarding **theatrical acting for women**, what is your opinion about women's acting, such as in the films produced in Iran?

A – If acting observes the Islamic restraints, it is allowed. However, if it deviates from them, it is not allowed. This matter is subject to the nature of the film and the woman's role in the film.

M24 – A **Muslim builder or contractor is invited to build a non-Muslim temple** in a non-Muslim country. Is it allowed?

A- It is not allowed.

M25 – A **Muslim calligrapher is invited to write a leaflet that promotes drinking alcohol, dancing-parties or restaurants selling pork**. Is he allowed to do this?
A- He is not allowed to do so.

M26 – Is it allowed for a **Muslim employer to employ non-Muslims** when there are Muslims in need of work?
A- It is allowed, but it is better and preferred to employ capable Muslims, since this can strengthen the ties of the Islamic community, especially in countries of expatriation.

M27 – A **photographer is invited to take photos of a wedding where alcohol is consumed**. Is he allowed to go?
A- It is allowed, provided that it does not result in him committing forbidden acts.

M28 – What are the **limits of obedience to the father and mother** regarding: (a) paying deference to them and caring for them; (b) treating them well; (c) obeying their orders to their children, both adults and non-adults?
A- The relationship between the son/daughter and his/her parents should be one of good treatment and care, and parents must be obeyed whenever their orders arise from their effort to protect their children from dangers. As for the child's future life, such as the type of specialisation that he or she wants to pursue or similar, there is no obligation to obey them if they prefer something else. (In any case,) the mechanism of dialogue should be used until all means are exhausted; and God is the guide.
M29 – Is it allowed **to give witness via telephone, fax or postal letter**?

A- Yes, it is allowed, assuming knowledge of the identity of the witness.

M30 – A father asks his son's friend to help in improving his son's behaviour, and asks him after a while to see how his son's behaviour (is changing). Is this **friend allowed to reveal the son's private affairs to the father**, including those that the son does not wish to be revealed to anyone?
A- It seems that this is an example of advice (and do it is allowed).

M31 – If copying computer software programs without the permission of the publishing company is not Islamically allowed, is it allowed **to copy a copy** – meaning that if A buys the original copy then copies it and gives or sells the copy to B, is B allowed to copy it? And is B allowed to give it to a third person to copy?
A- If these programs are in copyright, it is not allowed to copy them for trading, nor for personal use.

M32 – Some Islamic establishments and *Shī'ite* establishments produce computer programs of some books, making it easier for the researcher to refer to and benefit from them. Written on them is a sentence stating that copying the program is not allowed.
(a) Is **copying them** forbidden?
(b) Is **giving them to someone who wants to copy** them forbidden?
A- The answer is the same as in the previous question.

M33 – Islam prohibits adoption; but **if one raises such a child**:

(a) then **one or both of his parents turns up**, and the child is returned to them, would the foster parent have the right to ask them to pay for what he has spent on the child?
(b) if the **child reaches puberty or adulthood**, is the foster parent obliged to tell the child that he is not the true father?
A-
(a) He does not have the right to do that.
(b) He must tell him, since Allah the most High says: ((Name your adopted sons after their fathers; that is more just in the sight of Allah)) 33:5.

(N) Living in non-Muslim Countries

N1 – What do you say about **resorting to public institutions in disputes** regarding various issues such as the violation of a Muslim's body, honour, possessions etc?
A – It is allowable for the Muslim to resort to unjust and infidel courts if claiming his rights depends on this and no other means is available.

N2 – Is it allowed for a person **to buy a passport that belongs to someone else, or to change a passport photograph** to gain entry to a given country, if he later informs the officials in that country that he has done this?
A – He should not do this since it may lead to all kinds of difficulties on the one hand, and it (essentially) involves lying and the dishonour of a Muslim on the other.

N3 – What is the ruling regarding the **burial of Muslims in non-Muslim cemeteries**?

A – Not allowed except in a compelling case (*iḍṭirār*).

N4 – And what if a **burial place allocated for a dead Muslim inside a non-Muslim cemetery is not available**?
A – Burial must be completed in any way possible, if burial in a Muslim cemetery or in an allocated place is not achievable.

N5 – What is your opinion (ruling) regarding **burial inside a wooden box**?
A – This is allowed, provided that burial specifications are correct: being placed in the correct depth of earth, with earth and stones poured down upon the body, and not simply leaving it inside a vault etc.

N6 – If a Muslim dies in a non-Muslim country where no Muslim cemetery is available, and it is possible to send him/her for burial in a Muslim country only at very high cost, is **burial in non-Muslim cemetery** allowed?
A – If spending the necessary money leads to intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*), it is allowed.

N7 – If a **dead Muslim has no kinsfolk** in the country of expatriation, who should take care of all his affairs?
A – If none of his relatives are there, and if seeking their consent from their place of residence, by any means of communication proves impossible, and an Islamic jurist is not accessible, then just believers must take care of these matters.

N8 – Is it obligatory on financially-capable Muslims – obligatory under conditions of sufficiency (*wujūb kifā'iyy*) – **to buy a cemetery**

for Muslims, especially if we know that some dead Muslims are otherwise going to be buried in non-Muslim cemeteries?
A – It is not obligatory on them.

N9 – Is it allowed **to steal possessions** – both private and public – **from non-Muslims** or to destroy them?
A – This is not allowed if they are at peace with Muslims and not engaged in war with them.

N10 – Is it allowed **to give false information to insurance companies**, and is it allowed **to stage an accident for money**?
A – This is not allowed in both cases.

N11 – Is it allowed **to join parties, parliaments or ministries** in non-Muslim countries?
A – This is not allowed as a matter of principle, unless there is an essential (needed) advantage (*maṣlaḥa*) in doing so.

N12 – Is it obligatory **to abide by the rules and laws of the host country**? What about the Islamic legal position **if these laws violate Islamic laws**?
A – Abiding by the laws upon which the society's public order – which protects souls, possessions and honour – depends is obligatory; and adherence to one's duties precludes the commission of any forbidden act or abandoning any obligatory act.

N13 – Does a **non-Muslim neighbour** have rights? And what is the minimum of these rights?
A – Any neighbour – Muslim or non-Muslim – has definite rights in respect of his neighbour.

N14 – Is it allowed **to have non-Muslim friends**?
A – It is allowed, provided that this does not have a (negative) influence on your religion.

N15 – Is it allowed **to offer greetings to non-Muslims during their feasts**, such as the New Year?
A – It is allowed, as a matter of principle.

N16 – What is the ruling regarding **spying on non-Muslims**?
A – It is not allowed from the point of view of principle, unless this is done under the orders of an Islamic Jurist when the interests of Islam and Muslims are at stake.

N17 – Is it allowed **to enter churches**, (provided that this is) not with the intention of embracing Christianity?
A – No objection to this, if it is to familiarize oneself with it, provided that it does not involve any harm to the person entering, or any dishonour to him, or any other forbidden thing.

N18 – Is the **burial of a Muslim in a part of a cemetery**, belonging to the People of the Book, **allocated to Muslims** allowed or not?
A – If this part is prepared as a cemetery for Muslims, or if it is not regarded as an annex to the cemetery of the People of the Book, then it is allowed.

N19 – Is it allowed **to cheat in examinations** in an infidel state, given that it (the state) helps those infidels who hold its belief doctrine?

A – It is not allowed except in compelling cases (*iḍṭirār*), because this matter relates, in its negative consequences, to the Muslim not the state.

N20 – Is it allowed for a Muslim who has been wronged by a party **to resort to the courts in the West** in his complaint against the wrongdoer, and **is there a difference if the wrongdoer is a Muslim**?
A – It is allowed if it is to respond to aggression, or if obtaining his rights is completely dependent on this, and abstention from it causes intense difficulty (*haraj*).

N21 – Is it allowed for **Muslim children in Western countries to collect empty bottles from streets, parks and rubbish bins and to sell them** to meet their needs and help their relatives? Does this work have negative effects on Muslim children?
A – There is no problem in this, unless it leads to the dishonour of Muslims and harms their reputation – especially seeing that Westerners hold a negative view of using children for such work.

N22 – Some people knock on the door holding a small box to collect **donations to help cancer patients and others**; should we help them?
A – This is good, for the Prophet (sawa) said that there is a reward for everything that has a 'wet liver', i.e. humans and most animals. Also, this proves to people that we are humanistic in sympathising with humanity's pains, and so this gives the true image of Islam.

N23 – A **person works in a supermarket** in Europe, and sometimes the owner asks him **to take boxes of alcoholic**

beverages from one place to another. Is this allowed, and what is the ruling regarding his wages?
A – If he is subjected to intense difficulty (*ḥaraj*) so that he has no chance of escaping from this task except by giving up his job, which would put his entire livelihood in intense difficulty, then there is no objection to it. On this assumption, taking a box from one place to another without serving it to people is not forbidden. If leaving the job is intensely difficult for him, according to his objective circumstances, then Allāh the Most High says: **'and laid on you no burdens in the observance of your faith'** 22:78. The wages taken in this job are *ḥalāl* in any case.

N24 – Is it allowed **to violate some laws of the host country if they contradict our Islamic habits**, traditions and values?
A – It is allowed, provided that this is done wisely and flexibly and in a way that does not harm the Muslims' reality or reputation there, for it is obligatory on Muslims to preserve their habits, values and Islamic rulings wherever they are, if this does not lead to very intense difficulty (*ḥaraj shadīd*); also, it is obligatory on them to preserve Islam's and the Muslims' reputation in the eyes of others.

N25 – Is it allowed **to steal water, electricity** etc from a non-Islamic state?
A – It is absolutely not allowed.

N26 – If I cannot find another job, is it allowable for me **to work in a supermarket in which a department sells alcoholic beverages**? And **what if I am employed in that departm**ent itself?
A – It is allowed to work in such shops in these countries, even if forbidden things are sold, provided that the work of the person does

not involve selling forbidden things. But if the work involves selling or serving people forbidden things, it is not allowed as a matter of principle, unless abstention from so doing leads to very intense difficulty (*ḥaraj shadīd*). If, for instance, the person in question cannot find other work, and that being without work causes him and his children to go hungry and they have to beg or humiliate themselves etc as a result, then this work is allowed in light of the verse: **'and laid on you no burdens in the observance of your faith'** 22:78.

N27 – Is it allowed **to work as an employee in a non-Islamic state**?
A – It is allowed if the job is not in itself forbidden, meaning that it involves forbidden acts.

N28 – In non-Muslim countries, **when sending a Muslim's corpse to another country** they carry out a process in which all the **inside organs are removed**, leaving the abdomen empty of organs. Is this allowed?
A – It is absolutely not allowed, but (then) the dead must be buried in the country in which he died, for we are not allowed to replace something recommended (*mustaḥabb*) with another that is forbidden. Even if the dead person had requested this in his will, there is a problem in this matter, since such a process represents mutilation of the dead and so is not allowed, except in some special cases – and this is not one of them – such as if there is no place to bury him/her or if there is no cemetery for the Muslims and the like. However, some jurisprudence discussions may arise regarding this prohibition ruling on the basis that the mutilation carries with it the meaning of exemplary punishment, according to what this expression may imply, therefore is not true in the case where what is intended is doing good

for the dead by burying him in a Muslim cemetery or in his family's cemetery, which leads to him being remembered through the reciting of the (chapter of) al-Fātiḥa, the Qur'ān, supplications etc. Also, a discussion may arise from the fact that if the foundation of prohibition is the *ḥadīth* ruling that Allāh has made the believer honoured in death as he is honoured alive, this seems to relate to the aggressive side of things, since this refers to what is prohibited during his life, not the consideration in which some good is done to him, such as a surgical operation that involves removing his intestine for his own good.

N29 – Is it allowed **to sell food coupons** that are given out in Western countries, noting that they are sold at a lower price than their real value **and that the law forbids the selling and buying** of these coupons?

A – A person has to abide by the laws of the land and must be faithful in his legal adherence in the country where he resides and in which a covenant has been undertaken by him so to do: **'O believers, be true to your obligations'** 5:1. Especially in these matters, the believer, whether living in a non-Muslim country or in a Muslim country, must be a role model for people in his abiding by the obligations which he accepted when he entered the land, so that he becomes the bright image of a true Muslim.

N30 – I am **a doctor** working in a hospital in London, and sometimes **patients request us to see that their corpse is cremated after death**. Is this allowed? (My role is to sign the paper authorizing cremation.)

A – The patient's request is void, because patients are allowed to request in their will only what is (Islamically) legal and allowed (*ḥalāl*),

but any forbidden thing (*ḥarām*) is not allowed and a will including such a thing as cremating a corpse is void. A person is allowed to request in his will to be buried as normal, and thus his request for his corpse to be cremated is a forbidden request, and is not allowed to be implemented, and the doctor is not allowed to sign the documents in question.

N31 – Which is better: **the burial of Muslims in a Muslim cemetery** in the non-Muslim country where they have died, **or taking them to a Muslim country** but with the high charges this will incur?

A- The important thing as far as the Islamic ruling is concerned is burial in a Muslim cemetery. As far as preference is concerned, it depends on the issues arising from the burial in this rather than that cemetery. For instance, burial in the country (of origin) may result in a lot of visitors coming (to their grave) and reciting prayers for them, something that might not occur in countries of expatriation. But this should be weighed up against the cost, which might lead to intense difficulty in some cases. (Also,) burial in countries of expatriation might become obligatory if transportation of the dead means emptying the corpse of its intestines etc; in this case, it becomes prohibited to transfer them; and God is all-Knowing.

N32 – If a Muslim tried **to withdraw money from a cash machine** of a non-Muslim bank **and more money came out** than requested, is he allowed to take the extra money without the knowledge of the bank?

A- He is not allowed to do so.

N33 – A Muslim bought goods from a non-Muslim company in a non-Muslim country and the **seller by mistake gave him more** than he ordered. Is he allowed to take the extra amount? Is it obligatory for him to tell the seller about his mistake?
A- He is not allowed to take the extra without the consent of the owner.

N34 – A Muslim (living) in the West claims to have been driving cars in his own country for years and supports his claim with a letter from a certain company or the like in order to pay less to an insurance company, benefiting as a result. Is he allowed **to be untruthful in his claim, even using equivocation (*tawriyah*)**? And is helping him to do this allowed?
A- He is not allowed to do so, since entering into an insurance contract implies abiding by all its terms, and thus he is not allowed to be untruthful.

N35 – If a Muslim who is employed on a hourly rate of pay in a private company, or by the government, or under contract to work in a non-Muslim country **takes breaks from his work, or does not do his best, or intentionally works at a slower pace**, does he deserve his wages?
A- He is not allowed to do this, since it is in breach of his work contract.

N36 – Is it allowed **to walk to the cemetery with mourners for a non-Muslim dead person**, if he was a neighbour for instance?
A- It is allowed, especially when considering the good results that may be derived from this, such as showing the tolerance and humanistic nature of Islam.

N37 – Is there reward for **giving alms (help) to People of the Book or infidels**?

A- There is a narration that there is reward for giving to any needy soul (*Inna likulli kebidin ḥarrā ajran*), but it is better to practise this only when there are reasons that make giving to them preferable.

N38 – A **European school may employ teachers who do not believe in any religion**, and who deny the existence of God in front of students. Is it allowed **to send Muslim students to this school**, even if there is strong probability that they are going to be influenced by such teachers?

A- It is not allowed, and Muslims are obliged under conditions of sufficiency (*wujūb kifā'iyy*) to provide a school in which they can preserve their children's religion. We have called for 'the school before the mosque' because – according to the concept of schooling in our modern times – we can pray in the school but cannot teach our children in the mosque. (But if such a school is not available, and until such a school is available) there is no objection, but the children should be taken to the mosque regularly.

N39 – Is it allowed for those resident in the West **to send their daughters** who wear the *ḥijāb* to **mixed schools**, whether education is compulsory or not, when single-sex schools are available but are either expensive, far away or academically weak?

A- It is allowed to send them to mixed schools if their religion is preserved from weakening and being tempted to commit forbidden acts is unlikely. At any rate, it is preferable – if not obligatory – to strive to establish schools that are guided by Islam, theoretically and practically.

N40 – Is it allowed **to go to beaches and parks for leisure** if there is a danger of encountering scenes that are morally unacceptable?
A- It is not allowed if this leads to the dishonour of those involved, or leads to a weakening of their moral immunity or being tempted into other things that are Islamically unacceptable.

N41 – If a Muslim, in a non-Muslim land of emigration, **finds a clothes bag which has the owner's label** on it, **or no label** at all, what should he do with it? And what **if he finds money**?
A- He is not allowed to take it and he must return it to its owner if he knows who it is, or make the find known (to the public or the authorities) if he does not know who the owner is, as outlined in the rulings of finding (*luqtah*).

N42 – The **families of some Muslims who die in the West like to transfer their bodies to Muslim countries**. But since the transfer takes a long time on account of the official procedures, their **blood has to be taken out of their bodies to prevent their rapid decomposition**. Is it allowed to take the blood out for this reason?
A- It is not allowed as a precautionary ruling (*aḥwaṭ*).

N43 – In some European countries there are **shops that sell domestic goods and the buyer has the right to return them within two weeks** of the purchase date. Is it allowed to buy an item with the intention of using it within that period then to return it after that, and so the transaction has been to take advantage of this mentioned benefit? And is the ruling different if the buyer is a Muslim?

A- The matter depends on the (purchase) contract, including any implied conditions that do not conform to the aforementioned benefit, since the right to return (the goods) applies to when the item is still new; and God is all-Knowing.

N44 – Can we pay **the Imām's share to help pay for the marriage of a believer** in the West, when the hard currency paid here could help in the marriage of many people in many Muslim countries?

A- It is allowed.

(O) Propagating Islam (*At-Tablīgh/ad-da'wah*)

O1 – Is it allowed **to give the Qur'ān as a present to non-Muslims**, if there is a probability that they will not respect it?

A – It is allowed, rather it is recommended, since introducing them to it is one of the means to call them to Islam.

O2 – Is enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil) (*amr bil-ma'rūf wa nahy 'anil-munkar*), conveying (*tablīgh*) and guiding (*wa'dh*), the **exclusive (responsibility) of religious scholars**, or are these the responsibility of all groups in Islamic society?

A – They belong to all groups in the society, although religious scholars have the biggest role since they are dedicated to these matters, and have the necessary knowledge and capabilities.

O3 – Is it allowed **not to declare the whole truth**, so that arriving at the truth takes place gradually?

A – All possible means for enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil) must be studied so that this is achieved, (albeit) gradually; and the positive and negative points of each method should also be studied so that it does not have a negative effect on this endeavour.

O4 – Is it allowed **to boycott a disobedient, sinful Muslim**?
A – If the boycott makes him abandon what is wrong (*munkar*) it is allowed.

O5 – What is the ruling regarding **not interfering with a believer's bad habits**?
A – Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong (evil) is a must so that deviation does not spread within the believing society... and this involves using wisdom and good guidance.

O6 – Is it allowed **to give the Holy Qur'ān as a present to the People of the Book for education** and possible guidance towards (embracing) Islam?
A – No objection to this if it is for education and guidance.

O7 – In light of the intensity of the media's distortion of the image of Islam and Muslims in the eyes of the People of the Book, is it obligatory on Muslims **to show how Islam depends on morals** and the support of each other, and love towards the people around them?
A – (They) must strive to call to Allāh the Most High: **'Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation and reason with them in the most courteous manner.'** 16:125. Islam must be presented in its true image through a loving approach and

good morals, following the example of the Messenger of Allāh (sawa) and the pure Imams (as).

O8 – What is the ruling regarding **false rumours** that ill-intentioned people or groups instigate **against religious scholars**?
A – (You) must strive to clarify the picture for those who have been influenced by these people or their words, and to clarify the truth, so that repentance is accompanied by a good deed.

O9 – What is the ruling regarding the **slander of religious scholars or Grand Islamic Jurists** (*marāji'*), even if they are not the most knowledgeable (*ghayr al-a'lam*) or if there is some dispute regarding their level of knowledge (competence) or the like?
A – It is not allowed to slander or harm (in speech) any believer, so this applies also to those who are at the forefront of explaining Islamic rulings or conveying the Message of Allāh, or who, through their role, represent the vicegerents of Imam al-Mahdī (as) in his occultation.

O10 – Is it allowed **to talk in a negative way about religious scholars**, even if only for making an appraisal of them?
A – This is not allowed except for discussions regarding knowledge, and only if those who engage in such discussions have the necessary qualities and abilities, through their specialist positions, and have a clear picture of the foundation upon which this scholar (being appraised) has built his opinion.

O11 – Is it allowed for **a taxi driver to transport a person who has (a bottle of) alcoholic beverage**, and what is the ruling regarding the money he charges for this?

P6 – What is your opinion regarding **McDonald's restaurants**?
A – Don't we have Saudi, Kuwaiti, Pakistani, Iraqi and Lebanese restaurants? Why eat in these restaurants, where it is not known if the meat is *ḥalāl* or not?
Don't we have people who know how to cook and excel in it? Why the complex *'kul faranjī birinjī'* (Every Western thing is excellent')? Our food is more delicious than theirs and our cooking is better!

Grand Ayatollah

Sayyid Muhammad Hussain Fadlullah

ISLAMIC LANTERNS

Conceptual and jurisprudence questions for natives, emigrants and expatriates